

FIDELITY,

Vol 9 Id

OR,

LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT.

A TALE.

WITH OTHER

P O E M S.

By WILLIAM PARSONS, Esq.

N.

LE DONNE, I CAVALIER, L'ARME, GLI AMORI,
LE CORTESIE, L'AUDACI IMPRESE, IO CANTO.

ARIOSTO.

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FIDELITY,

LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT

A TALE

WITH NOTES

P O E M S

BY WILLIAM PARSONS, ESQ.

OF GREAT BRITAIN, ESQ. OF THE
IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, ESQ.

LONDON

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1792

PREFACE.

THE leading circumstances of the following TALE may be found in Monsieur LE GRAND's collection of *Fabliaux ou Contes du 12^e. et du 13^e. Siecle*; which have supplied the subjects for many of the Tales of BOCCACCIO, CHAUCER, LA FONTAINE, &c. neither of whom appears to have been a great inventor of incidents; and so universally does a good fable find its way into all languages, that many of these *Fabliaux* themselves were drawn from sources of a much earlier date, and may even be traced back to an oriental origin.

This story has in the original the irregularities which usually abound in the compositions of that period, and the escape of SIR GAWAIN from the sword that had been destructive to so many of his predecessors is left entirely unaccounted for, which induced the present narrator to introduce MERLIN as the contriver of a spell, by which the Lady should be preserved for the husband to whom she was predestined. He has also deviated in some other respects from his original, not choosing to confine himself to the servility of translation, but preferring to describe the whimsical situations afforded him by the old Romance in his own manner. His fancy was struck with the introduction of an enchanted sword on a wedding night, which

is proportionably more interesting than the well known danger of DAMOCLES, as the allurements of a beautiful woman are more powerful than those of any feast which the most refined gluttony can imagine—and the subsequent incident, in which the fidelity of a dog is represented as surpassing that of a Lady, though degrading to the sex, if considered as intended for *general* application, appeared to him to contain a moral not totally inapplicable to the present times, in which we perceive, though few, yet too many instances of deviation from that purity of conduct which ought to be the chief boast of a woman. To those Ladies, who may be in danger of increasing such examples of female frailty, he addresses himself:

“ Dicendole, ch’ a donna, ne bellezza,

Ne nobiltà, ne gran fortuna, basta

Si, che di vero onor monti in altezza,

Se per nome, e per opra, non è CASTA!”

ARIOSTO.

And such, when properly understood, was the tendency of the *Nouvelle Heloise* of ROUSSEAU; for, however that extraordinary work may have been censured as inimical to female virtue, the true key to it is the admirable moral it contains for *married women*, the correctness of whose conduct ROUSSEAU justly thought of greater importance to society than that of the unmarried—and the example of JULIA’S early frailty was of little consequence in the old system of manners in FRANCE, for which country his book was intended; girls having been there in general so restricted as to be but little exposed to temptation, while the gallantries of married women were openly indulged.

It will, perhaps, be thought some excuse for the satirical

conclusion of this tale, that the same incident, which is also to be found in the *Dictionnaire d'Anecdotes*, has been judged worthy of imitation by a celebrated Poet of Germany, Mr. BÜRGER, (known to the English reader by three recent translations of his LENORE) who in his *Lied von Treue* thus apostrophizes the too sanguine believers in a proverbial expression of his countrymen on the constancy of lovers:

“ O männer der Treue ! jetzt warn' ich euch laut :
Zu fest nicht aufs bidermann's-wörtchen gebaut,
Dass ältere Liebe nicht rostet ! ”

Although, if such had been the practice of earlier antiquity, the Trojan war would never have happened, and literature must consequently have been deprived of its best ornament, the ILIAD of HOMER. The *quiet resignation* of SIR GAWAIN, and of the MARSCHALL VON HOLM of Mr. BÜRGER is recommended to gentlemen who may find themselves in similar situations—These heroes furnish very laudable examples prudently to abstain from the effusion of blood, and leave ladies, who may be governed by capricious inclinations, at full liberty to choose for themselves.

conclusion of this tale, that the same incident, which is also to
be found in the *Stenograph*, has been judged
worthy of imitation by a celebrated poet of Germany. But
the same incident is also found in the English reader by three recent trans-
lations of the *Stenograph* who in his book has given three spe-
cimens of the same incident in a novel and original manner.
of his countrymen on the contrary of his own.
The *Stenograph* is a book which is well known to all who are
interested in the history of the human mind.
Although it is not the purpose of this introduction
the *Stenograph* has been here presented, and it is
most respectfully recommended to the reader of this book.
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interested in the history of the human mind.
recommended to the reader of this book.
situation. These are the only two books which are
worthy to be placed in the hands of the reader, and it is
who may be governed by the same principles as the reader of this book
to choose for themselves.

THE AUTHOR'S

INTRODUCTORY APOLOGY.

YE BRITISH DAMES, who ne'er from virtue stray !
Correctly kind, and innocently gay,
Whose smiles give transport, and whose praise is fame !
—The timid Muse shall deprecate your blame.
Great were her sorrow, should her sportive page
Ruffle your features with an *ugly* rage,
Swell your soft lips to anger's pouting size,
And draw indignant glances from your eyes !

Deem not the bard of that licentious throng*,
Perversely caustic, and severely wrong,
Whose wild, ungovern'd, satire strives to vex
With *general* ridicule your softer sex ;
Whose lawless malice, marring nature's plan,
Shows women as the constant foes of man,

* Juvenal, Boileau, &c.

And, griev'd to find their sum of vice so small,
Ascribes the frailties of a few to all!

Ungrateful scribblers! whose vile pens defame
That last, best, work of Nature's rising aim,
Which, once achiev'd, unable to excel,
She stay'd her plastic hand, and said 'twas well.
That sex, to which, beneficent and kind,
Th' Unerring Will not only hath assign'd
From blank extinction man's proud race to save,
But gild our way from cradles to the grave,
To ease bring happiness, to woes relief,
Double our pleasures, and divide our grief,
To guard in infancy, delight in youth,
In age to solace, and in death to sooth!

Tho' from the skies apostate angels fell,
Yet more remain'd, who chose not to rebel.
Have we not trac'd, in each succeeding age,
How *female glories* crowd th' historic page?
Th' admiring mind, with glad selection, roves
Through the chaste annals of connubial loves.
When adverse fates bade wise ULYSSES roam,
An equal praise his consort gain'd—at home.
Against her fame tho' LATIAN lays conspire,
We duly honour DIDO's funeral pyre;
We read of fair LUCRETIA's blameless life,
Who scorn'd to live, a violated wife;
Of POMPEY, by the storms of fortune toss'd,
Blest in his *wives*, altho' the world he lost!

Of her who dar'd a NERO's guilty rage,
 And nobly bled with her expiring sage*,
 Of ARRIA's steel, and PORCIA's burning coals
 We read—and more who grace the ROMAN rolls!
 But loftier she, by ENGLISH praise renown'd,
 Who suck'd the poison from her EDWARD's wound,
 Nor e'er shall die, in lasting verse display'd,
 The true attachment of the NUTBROWN MAID!

BRITAIN! are such examples found in thee?
 †Thou precious gem, set in the silver sea!
 Where richer groves than PAPHIAN bowers entwine,
 And brighter streams than ACIDALIAN shine,
 Where as that Goddess, once her subtle foe,
 In CYPRUS bade the fragrant myrtle grow,
 With gifts more valued, VIRTUE dwells respected,
 By nature welcom'd, and by laws protected,
 Deigns to relax her awful frown awhile,
 And bless with milder charms—*her chosen isle!*
 Round her attractive shape, like JUNO, braces
 Fair VENUS' cincture, and commands her Graces,
 Whose once fantastic forms she bids appear
 In decent garb, and amiably severe,
 Bids in chaste eyes no wanton Cupids ride,
 But listed seraphs combat on her side!

* Paulina, the wife of Seneca.

† "This precious stone set in the silver sea." SHAKESPEARE's *Life and Death of King RICHARD II.*

O CHASTITY ! thou foe, yet friend of man !
 Mysterious guard of mighty nature's plan !
 Whose freezing look the lewd assailers fear,
 More fell than BRADAMANT's enchanted spear * !
 The parent's, and the husband's, treasur'd hoard !
 Lov'd in the virgin, in the wife ador'd !
 Who leav'st high heav'n, on this base earth to own
 The female breast for thy peculiar throne !
 Now while, beneath some *female touch*, the lyre
 Feels in each vale a more than "*master's fire*,"
 (For Ladies now so well in verse succeed
 Faster they write than Gentlemen can read,)
 Can a male *creature's* less etherial mind
 By nuptial, nor monastic, vows, *refin'd*,
 Untrain'd by *mystic* abstinence to soar,
 A proud adept in ROSICRUCIAN lore,
 Lift to this awful theme his daring lays,
 And with unhallow'd lips pronounce thy praise,
 Hailing, in strains of old SIMONIDES †,
 Within this *honied* land—*whole hives* of BEES ?

* In poco spatio ne gittò per terra

Trecento e più con quella *lancia d'oro*,

Ella sola quel dì vinse la guerra,

Mise ella sola in fuga il popol Moro. ARIOSTO, Canto 36.

† SIMONIDES, after various comparisons not very flattering to the ladies, selects the *bee* as the type of a virtuous and good wife.

Τὴν δ' ἐκ μελισσῆς, τὴν τις εὐτυχὲς λαβὼν.

Τοιας γυναικας ἀνδρασιν χαρίζεται

Ζεὺς τὰς ἀριστὰς καὶ πολυφραδιστατάς. SIMON. APUD STOBÆUM.

" Ah ! change the strain," some sorrowing husband cries,
 Far from whose arms his perjur'd partner flies,
 Flies with mad haste, by foul seduction led
 To the rank joys of an adult'rous bed,
 " Not such this isle as your warm fancy paints,
 " Nor is the land, alas !—a land of saints !
 " Nor Virtues here, nor Graces more remain,
 " But Vice brings worse than Furies in her train.
 " Complaints, Disgust, and ever-boding Fear,
 " And black Despair, their horrid fronts uprear ;
 " Tormenting Jealousy, with jaundic'd eye,
 " Low'ring Suspicion leads, Revenge hard by
 " Determin'd stalks—at his right hand are seen
 " Hatred and Anger, with malignant mien.
 " Slander, Contempt, Reproach, a bitter crew !
 " And self-accusing Shame their steps pursue,
 " Repentance last, with downcast eyes, and slow,
 " Moistens the earth with tears that ever flow !"

Here free-born girls in liberty rejoice,
 And willing wed—the husband of their choice.
 What honours, pleasures, wait the wedded dame !
 No feast of CERES * damps her genial flame !
 No RUSSIAN knout's tremendous scourge appalls !
 No TURK secludes in unrelenting walls !

* In allusion to the self-denial enjoined during the ΘΕΣΜΟΦΟΡΙΑΙ of the Greeks, and the CEREALIA of the ROMANS.

Paucæ adeo Cereris vittas contingere dignæ. JUVENAL, 6 Sat.

NO TARTAR KHÂN compels to slav'ry dire !
NO BRAMIN lights the life-consuming fire !
NO shoes of CHINA cramp the roving feet !
NO PERSIAN eunuchs every wish defeat !
NO cross DUENNA acts the watchful spy !
NO SALIC laws *the right to rule* deny !

Yet true it is that many a BRITISH spouse
Bewails with empty arms his plighted vows.
That *tree*, which did of old in EDEN shoot
Its branches, bending with forbidden fruit,
That fatal tree indigenous is found
In BRITISH—as in every other ground,
That tree of *knowledge*, by whose means reveal'd
Are num'rous things, which better lie conceal'd ;
And long as its pernicious sprigs remain,
Shall *curiosity* be women's bane !
—Who taste it *here* their *value* strive to *know*,
Which may be rais'd too high, or sunk too low ;
Exactness, truth, they seek, not common gazers,
And fly to Juries—for their *sworn appraisers*,
Who weigh th' adult'rous guilt with judgment nice,
And fix of sin the stipulated price !

Ten thousand pounds !—and with ten thousand sighs,
PHILANDER paid, in beggar'd penance wise.
In public “sober, stedfast, and demure,”
As angels lovely, and as angels pure,
No breath of scandal FLAVIA's fame had tainted,
Such high perfection ne'er had poet painted.

By mothers ostentatiously display'd
 A faultless model for each darling maid.
 Not DIAN, when EUROTAS' banks she grac'd,
 Was half so beauteous, or seem'd half so chaste!
 "Transporting thought!" PHILANDER cried, "to gain
 "A prize for which so many sigh in vain.
 "As genuine sportsmen chase the game that flies,
 "Which, seen at hand, their active thoughts despise,
 "While meaner spirits woo the easy fair,
 "Be mine the glorious fruit of time and care!"
 —Yet *he not first* the husband had supplanted,
 The *dear-bought* joy—for *nothing* had been granted.
 Justice like love is blind—much secret sport
 Is ne'er divulg'd—to entertain the court.
 This modern DIAN—in her fresher bloom,
 Had found ENDYMION—in *a favourite groom*!

Her glass had told FLIRTILLA she was fair,
 "What dames of LONDON can with me compare?
 "Shall charms like these be wasted in the shade,
 "At rural balls, to rural fops display'd?
 "No—let me shine at court, with prouder aim,
 "Eclipse the duchess and the duke inflame!"

* Χούμος ερως τοιοῦτος, τὰ μὲν φευγόντα διώκειν
 Οἶδε, τὰ δ' ἐν μέσσω κείμενα παρπετάται. CALLIM. EPIG.

Thus imitated by HORACE.

——— Meus est amor huic similis, nam
 Transvolat in medio posita, et fugientia captat. Sat. 2. lib. i.

She marries—and at opera, ball, or play,
 Her everlasting coach still *stops the way*.
 Her *worth* she thinks by gallantries increas'd,
 And rates it—twice ten thousand pounds at least.
 The mod'rate TWELVE—to do strict justice willing,
 Consult, and deem her husband's loss—a *shilling*!

Nor rigid laws can quench the wanton flame,
 But fil'd gazettes still chronicle our shame,
 Annals, in which the spreading taint's compriz'd,
 For prurient girls are lost and—*advertis'd*!
 While down life's stream, in lonely licence hurl'd,
 The jest and pity of the gazing world,
 Th' unblushing matron, frolicksome and boon,
 *Swims, a *loose fish*—and waits the next *harpoon*!

If sordid av'rice more than love inflame,
 The husband chuckles at the gainful game,
 Whose *twice-blest* coffers swell, in due degrees,
 By portions first—and then by *damages*!
 O PITT! who rack'st for fresh supplies thy head,
Tax thou the *profits* of the marriage bed!
 The nation's debt shall sooner thus be paid,
 Than by such *wills* as THELLUSSON has made!
 Or, by the vast resource our *wars* maintain'd,
 New honours shall by cuckoldom be gain'd,

* The law of England respecting *women*, said Mr. Erskine, in the case *Esten v. the Duke of Hamilton*, is the same, as the law of Greenland respecting *whales*.

The doctrine shall be clearly understood
 That private vices are a public good;
 While female frailty props each tott'ring king,
 Order anew shall from disorder spring,
 BRITAIN exult in her improv'd *finance*,
 And D'IVERNOS predict the fall of FRANCE!

Accurst disgrace of this commercial land!
 Where gold alone each impulse can command,
 Prompt all our actions, all our wishes bound,
 Chase every grief, and med'cine every wound!

Such lucre's power! and soon shall it be told
 Our wives and daughters are at *Auctions sold*.

*Then ***** triumphs with obdurate head
 O'er KENYON living, as o'er MANSFIELD dead!
 Each covert practice *they* pronounc'd a fraud
He shall defend, by precedent unaw'd,

* Lord KENYON cannot be too much extolled by all lovers of truth and justice, for endeavouring to suppress adultery, gambling, and the fraudulent practices too common at auctions, which latter had been before reprobated by Lord MANSFIELD, and *puffing* was very lately, in the case *Howard v. Castle*, *unanimously* deemed illegal by the present judges—It is to be hoped that the virtuous exertions of our Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench, against the two former of these enormities will not be restrained by a superior power, as has been recently done with respect to the latter, by which a suit commenced at common law was cut short in its progress, a dispute, which might have been legally settled in a few hours, involved in a contest of years, and our whole establishment of judges and juries, the chief boast of an Englishman, rendered completely nugatory.

Deem *puffing* lawful, lawful to devise
 All specious tricks, all blemishes disguise,
 O'er every tye of honesty prevail,
 And make a *robbery* of every *sale* !
 If chance he hold, when purchasers contend,
 The vender of such *pretty goods* his *friend*,
 Pads, rouge, false teeth, shall then defy detection,
 While art supplies weak nature's imperfection.
All-arm'd, like PALLAS from the brain of Jove,
 The object shines, whom wond'ring eyes approve.
 Th' enraptur'd *buyer* hugs the dear deceit,
 Nor e'er had seen a Goddess so complete,
 Till vex'd he spurns, when each illusion drops,
 Th' imposture vile—of milliners and shops,
 By which our charmers are *transform'd* with ease,
 *And take like PROTEUS—any shape they please !

* * * * *

But to my story—gentle dames ! excuse
 On this grave subject such a playful muse,
 Whate'er the flowers gay Fancy loves to strew,
 Poets should still a *moral aim* pursue;
 And some may be converted—by a TALE,
 Tho' parents, KENYON, friends, and sermons fail !

* Εξ ἑτέρας ἑτέραν σε καὶ ἄλλην ἀλλοτε λευσσω

Φαινομένην πολλῇσι μίαν μορφῇσι γυναῖκα.

Εκ τῶν ΝΑΥΜΑΧΙΩΤ.

FIDELITY,

OR,

LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT.

Who has not heard of BRITISH ARTHUR's name,
And ancient Chivalry's romantic fame?
Who has not heard of valiant deeds renown'd
Which swell the triumphs of the TABLE ROUND,
When BRITONS liv'd, by other laws control'd,
When dames were courteous, and when knights were bold?

Heav'ns! how unlike these tame degen'rate days!
Each breast then panted with the lust of praise,
Then in this isle, so marvelously chang'd!
Appear'd, where'er her steel-clad champions rang'd,
Caverns, and castles, and "enchantments drear,"
The tests of Valour in his proud career.
No waving sign then lur'd the trav'ler's eye,
Where hosts for paltry pence his wants supply,
No turnpike then the passing toll requir'd,
No hedge obstructed, and no causeway tir'd;
Not in mail coach, like bales of goods, convey'd,
Proud steeds, they rode, in coats of *mail* array'd,

Proud gen'rous steeds ! for twofold burthens train'd,
Nor was the pillion by the fair disdain'd !
While wild adventures, themes of every tongue,
Like hips and haws in every forest sprung !

Such was the time, and in the month of May,
Through a thick wood SIR GAWAIN chanc'd to stray;
A high-born prince, to ARTHUR near allied,
His sister's son, and of his court the pride.
The sweets to taste which vernal seasons yield,
No greater cause allur'd him to the field,
His coal-black steed he mounted had in haste,
Nor round his manly form his armour brac'd,
That armour oft in well-fought combats try'd;
But his keen sword was ever at his side,
His shield and lance were ever near his hand,
And thus equipp'd, who dar'd his force withstand ?
The spur of gold that glitter'd on his heel,
Suffic'd his knightly prowess to reveal.

Mild were the breezes, and serene the sky,
Each bush he pass'd breath'd charming melody,
Each flower he trod effus'd a grateful scent,
These lull'd his cares, and sooth'd him to content.
Lost in this happy vacancy of thought,
Long had he rov'd, nor other object sought,
Till night approach'd—why should he farther roam ?
The forest wide, and distant was his home ;
Anxious, through tangled paths, he strove in vain
The track he first pursued to trace again.

Embarrass'd long, he rov'd with doubtful aim,
Till sudden he perceiv'd a glimmering flame;
Through the thick branches, darken'd by the night,
Darts the long line of level-streaming light.
Thither he sped, and, near a blazing fire,
Beheld a stranger, clad in rich attire.
"Sir knight!" the stranger said, with gracious air,
"For well thine ornaments thy rank declare,
"What chance hath led thee at this cheerless hour,
"So far remote from sheltering hall or bower?
"Within this dreary wood's perplexing maze,
"When sun and moon withhold their friendly rays,
"Fierce ravening wolves, and venom'd serpents, dwell,
"Whose murd'rous rage 'twere terrible to tell.
"Hearing thy shouts, to guard thee from their ire,
"I kindled here this widely-blazing fire.
"Accept to-night such cheer as I can give,
"To-morrow thou shalt safe depart and live.
"I haste before, to show my guest the way,
"Thy death is certain, if thou make delay."

He spoke, and spurr'd his courser o'er the plain,
SIR GAWAIN, wond'ring, follow'd him amain,
The fleet hoofs rattling on the stony ground,
Through the dun shade the prince pursues the sound.
Leagues soon they pass, and to a hill proceed,
Nor up the steep relax their eager speed,
High on whose top a haughty castle lowers;
Now dim are seen its antiquated towers,

Now frown the battlements in awful state;

The stranger thunders at the massy gate.

They enter straight, and gain a spacious hall,
Where proud achievements deck the storied wall,
In order'd ranks where living tapers blaze,

A banquet richly spread the prince surveys.

And, seated, thus the generous host address'd,
In courteous guise, his much-admiring guest.

" Frankness I love, if with good breeding join'd,

" Should aught displease thee, speak at once thy mind,

" To honour thee, illustrious knight! be mine,

" Here freely revel; all thou seest is thine!"

He said, and left the wond'ring prince alone,
But, this too quick departure to atone,

As quick return'd—and to his ravish'd eyes
Produc'd a cause of fresh increas'd surprise.

In his right hand a blooming maid he led,

" Take her," he cried, " the partner of thy bed,

" My only daughter, worthy of thy care,

" Unless my partial voice miscall her fair."

Then stern he added to the blooming maid,
Who view'd the prince, much pleas'd, yet much afraid,

" Hence with coquettish arts, reluctance coy,

" Which women oft against their wish employ!

" This knight's my friend, it boots not to complain,

" Whate'er he ask, he must not ask in vain;

" To his desires be thou obedient still,

" Such are his claims, and such thy father's will!"

Again he vanish'd, and the blushing fair
 Left unprotected to the prince's care,
 Who, more astonish'd, ponder'd in his mind
 This strange reception, so abruptly kind,
 And while the daughter of his host he view'd,
 Was by her charms insensibly subdu'd.
 * Thus he, who knights in burnish'd arms had brav'd,
 By words and gestures was with ease enslav'd.
 A gradual awe o'er all his senses stole,
 Which did the claims the father gave control.
 † Silent awhile, his sighs alone declar'd
 That much he wish'd, hop'd little, nothing dar'd,
 With falt'ring voice his passion then he told,
 For genuine love more timid is than bold.
 Love too, full oft, with mild compulsion binds
 In mutual fetters sympathetic minds,
 And when commission'd Beauty deals a wound,
 Bids to her breast his potent shaft rebound.
 Thus the fair nymph, exulting in her power,
 Felt in return, at this relenting hour,
 Some secret wishes her soft breast excite,
 And plead in favour of the stranger knight.

* Ed io ch'arei giurato

Difendermi da huom coperto d'arme,

Con parole, e con cenni, fui legato.

PETRARCA, Trionfo d'Amore, Capit. 3.

† Ei che modesto è sì, com' essa è bella

Brama assai, poco spera, e nulla chiede.

TASSO, Gerusalemme Liberata, Canto. 2.

“SIR KNIGHT!” she said, “distrust my father’s wiles,
“His feign’d politeness, and perfidious smiles,
“Hadst thou presum’d on what he parting said,
“Thou wert already number’d with the dead.
“He with deep plots against thee still conspires,
“Thou must be cool, and bridle thy desires,
“For Powers unseen my chastity defend,
“Each rash attempt the culprit’s life must end.
“Enjoin’d strict silence, harsh commands till now
“Have bade me fear a father’s angry brow,
“But Love and Pity in my breast have sprung,
“These burst my bondage—these unchain my tongue;
“No earthly powers, nor aiding fiends of hell
“In soften’d breasts can Love and Pity quell.
“Strange tales of horror could my tongue unfold
“To freeze the am’rous, and appal the bold.
“But see! my father!—what he bids obey,
“And let no sign this confidence betray.
“Heed thou the counsel which I kindly give,
“To-morrow thou shalt safe depart and live.”

The father enters—at the table placed,
With viands rare, and rich metheglin, graced,
While oft the nymph the mantling cup supplies,
Like HEBE at the banquets of the skies,
Long they carouse—till, in some distant tower,
The castle clock resounds the midnight hour.
The father rises—“Haste the bed prepare,
“The bridal bed for this enamour’d pair!”

In mute dismay, the trembling prince was led
To the rich chamber, and the bridal bed.

Ah ! little felt he that proud joy which reigns
Triumphant in the jolly bridegroom's veins !
'Tumultuous thoughts assail'd his troubled mind,
Suspecting what his treach'rous host design'd.

In the rich chamber, which with nice display
All arts those times possess'd had render'd gay,
On perfum'd gales, in love-entrancing notes,
From lyres unseen a magic music floats,
More soft, more winning, than the LYDIAN airs
Which sooth'd of old the great EMATHIAN's cares,
When the world's victor by TIMOTHEUS' skill
Was bent submissive to a woman's will.

Round the gilt walls, adorn'd with wreaths of flowers,
'Tasteful as fairies deck their bridal bowers,
An hundred tapers dart their mingling rays,
And blended emulate the solar blaze.

* 'Th' accomplish'd maiden's guardian powers forbid
Her dazzling charms to be in darkness hid.
For age and ugliness was darkness made,
To shroud defects in no unfriendly shade,
But floods of light let youthful pairs employ,
Of light propitious to the genial joy !

And now the nymph, like TITIAN'S VENUS, spread,
Presses with naked charms the yielding bed,

* Non juvat in cœco Venerem committere motu.

Si nescis, oculi sunt in amore duces. PROPERTIUS, Eleg. 15. Lib. II.

The yielding bed, as if with feeling bless'd,
 Swells round her sides, delighting to be press'd.
 —Who fairest seem'd of earthly forms before
 Seems sky-born now, and bids mankind adore.
 One ivory arm, half hid, was gently placed
 Where gradual sinks her finely-taper'd waist,
 The other rais'd, to full inspection giv'n,
 (The proud distinction of the Queen of Heav'n *)
 With graceful air, in waving action, play'd,
 And o'er her forehead cast a tender shade.
 O'er her white neck her golden tresses flow,
 Like the gay sun beams on a field of snow.
 That melts not—but voluptuous thought supplies
 A humid lustre to her melting eyes,
 Bathing, as soft the whisp'ring Pleasures call,
 Their lashes long, which languishingly fall,
 So, mildly bright, AURORA's glist'ning dew
 The leaves of purple hyacinths suffuse!
 Persuasion sits upon her pulpy lips
 Where Love his own delicious nectar sips,
 Where sweeter fragrance each warm sigh exhales
 Than scented zephyrs from SABÆAN vales.
 And, ever and anon, her blushes vie
 With northern lights which flash athwart the sky.
 Blue swelling veins, beneath her dainty skin,
 Show the swift progress of the tide within;

* ————— μείδοντες δὲ θεῶν Αἴτκωλενος ἡπῆ'

HOMER, Iliad. Book I.

Wide o'er her face the flushing spirits throw
Youth's bloomy tints, and Love's peculiar glow,
While heave her breasts, rose-budded, firm, and round,
* As two twin roes amid the lilies bound.

—To tell her other charms, which then were seen,
Demands—a SOLOMON—OR ARRETINE!

Where is the man, of cautious prudence vain,
Whom fears or counsel at such hour restrain?
The prince, transported at th' alluring sight,
Rushes to crop the flower of sweet delight.

“Hold!” cries the nymph, “thine amorous hopes retard,
“I am not here without my wonted guard,
“Well known to me—is yon keen sword so small
“Thou seest it not? tho' from the gilded wall
“It threatens now—and soon its fatal spring,
“While fell enchantments loose the lengthening string,
“Shall, if thou touch me, with a murd'rous wound,
“Transfix thee faint and bleeding to the ground.
“With various blood the blade is crimson'd o'er,
“Its point yet moisten'd with the recent gore,
“Full twenty knights have, foully pierc'd by this,
“Died in the moment of expected bliss!”

Chill'd by her words, the throbbing prince, distress'd,
For a short time his strong desires suppress'd;
But soon, revived, he thinks the specious plea
Some feint of timid modesty may be.

* Thy two breasts are like two young roes that are twins, which feed among the lilies. SOLOMON'S SONG.

“ And what ?” he cries, “ shall I become the sport,
“ The fable of the gallant ARTHUR’s court ?
“ How shall I brook my old companions’ jeers,
“ Balk’d of my joys by such ill-founded fears ?”

Urg’d by this thought, with sudden impulse bold,
His vigorous arms the blooming fair enfold,
Then shriek’d the fair ! then work’d the baleful charm !
Swift flew the sword, and grazed one vigorous arm,
On the white bed the boiling current flows,
And baffled hopes but aggravate his woes.

Its task perform’d, the magic sword regain’d
Its former place, and menacing remain’d.
Th’ attempt the nymph could easily forgive,
And sees with glad surprise *one* lover live,
Fondly she hopes, this dang’rous trial past,
The baleful charm may be dissolv’d at last.
She joys to find the prince’s wound so slight,
And views him with affectionate delight,
But cautions still to keep his distant seat,
And not the dread experiment repeat!

But still the tapers burn, her charms invite,
And still he maddens at the tempting sight.
Oft he returns, unable to refrain,
As oft the sword inflicts the wonted pain.
By lovers ’twill be readily believ’d
How many wounds this amorous prince receiv’d !

When morning came, the father wond’ring saw
The prince alive, who met his host with awe.

“ Restrain’d by due *respect*, thy daughter’s charms
“ Not yet,” he said, “ have fill’d these longing arms,
“ For well I judg’d so great a prize for me
“ Thou could’st not mean, who am unknown to thee.”

Th’ ensanguin’d bed the father then inspected,
And soon the lame excuse was there detected,
And the means found which made the fair *respected*.
No mortal here could e’er commit a rape,
But much he marvel’d at the strange escape.

“ Who art thou ?” next impatiently he cried,
“ By whom begotten, and to whom allied ?”

SIR GAWAIN, with a frank and noble air,
Hasten’d his name and lineage to declare.
The alter’d sire, rejoicing to have found
Safe from the sword, a champion so renown’d,
Knowing the fame his early feats had won,
Own’d ARTHUR’s nephew proudly for his son;
Nor more delay’d, with gladsome voice to tell
“ The time’s arriv’d which breaks the direful spell,
“ The spell by MERLIN’s necromantic power
“ Wrought for my daughter, on her natal hour,
“ That *he* alone might wed the ripen’d fair
“ Whose charmed * life the thirsty sword should spare,
“ Her destin’d bridegroom, blest with every grace,
“ And sprung of great PENDRAGON’s royal race.

* I bear a *charmed* life. SHAKSPEARE’S Macbeth.

“ Nor hard the task for MERLIN’s matchless might,
“ * Born of a Nun, begotten by a Sprite !
“ Supreme of wizards ! whose tremendous call
“ Can make the stars from heav’ns high concave fall,
“ Blue light’nings loose, or stop their wing’d career,
“ Control the seasons, and invert the year,
“ Roll back the rivers, cleave the marble ground,
“ And summon Demons from the vast profound.
“ O Prince ! who now th’ important truth hast learn’d ;
“ Deserved by valour, and by perils earn’d,
“ To thee the nymph the kind enchanter dooms,
“ For thee th’ expanded flower of Beauty blooms.
“ Take from my willing hands this offer’d prize,
“ No more the magic guard in fury flies,
“ Nor gallant knights beneath my roof are kill’d,
“ Behold the wond’rous prophecy fulfill’d !”

What boots it now the solemn pomp to sing,
The public rites, the hymenæal ring,
The merry minstrel’s joy-diffusing song,
The games, the tourneys, and the gazing throng,
The ev’ning rebecks in the Castle hall,
The shouts of vassals round its outward wall,
The pageant shows, the festival delights,
The grace of ladies, and the pride of knights,
While num’rous neighbours flock from every side
To view the prince, and compliment the bride ?

* See Jeffrey of Monmouth.

The bride's soft bosom, all her terrors flown,
Thrill'd with warm hopes of pleasures yet unknown,
And legends say, that through the second night
No sword disturb'd this amorous pair's delight.

That second night, and many nights of bliss,
While soul met soul, and kiss replied to kiss,
How kind, how faithful, was this gentle dame!
How chaste, tho' warm, her still increasing flame!
My fluent Muse were breathless to record
The oaths and vows she plighted to her lord.

Five months of transport thus had roll'd away,
While ARTHUR wonder'd at the prince's stay.
His rising fame by new connections cross'd,
Is all the hero in the lover lost?
His nuptials known, and frequent summons brought,
Further excuses, but in vain, are sought.
SIR GAWAIN to his uncle's court must ride
To seek his armour, and present his bride.
That armour rusty by neglect has lain,
New trophies now he promises to gain,
But chief he pants with proud delight to show
The charms to which his fond affections grow,
While ARTHUR's dames shall veil their humbler pride,
Lost in the beauty of his fairer bride.

And now again his courser he bestrode,
In gorgeous weeds the dame behind him rode.
Still as they went, with frisking frolicks gay,
A little spaniel gambol'd o'er the way,

SIR GAWAIN took it often to his breast,
And for his Lady's sake the dog caress'd.
It was the lov'd companion of her youth,
And seem'd replete with gratitude and truth.
That this kind creature, by attention won,
Accustom'd by SIR GAWAIN's side to run,
Its master with unfeign'd attachment lov'd,
The sequel of the day's adventure prov'd.

Through the same forest now their journey lay,
Where five months back the prince had lost his way.
Here might the Muse prolong her languid lays
By soft description, if she courted praise,
And sing, while terms select her verse adorn,
The mild delights of an October morn.
But, as was wisely said in former song,
"A tale," I wot, "should never be too long."
Let this suffice, the moral of my lay,
As fall the leaves, so human joys decay!

Endearments fond their tedious road beguile,
And thus the dame, with such a winning smile;
Like mother EVE's, "celestial rosy red,"
'Twould tempt a hermit, or revive the dead.

"My Prince! My Lord! how pleas'd with thee I rove,
"Cheer'd by the blessings of domestic love!
"Now but in dreams the fatal sword appears,
"Thy dangers then renew my former fears;
"For that sad night I felt unusual dread,
"At every wound on thee my bosom bled.

“ Exhaustless source of every joy I know !
“ Mirth is a torment if from thee I go,
“ Far dearer now than when my virgin charms
“ Were safely yielded to thy circling arms !
“ Oft have I heard the sneering Cynics say,
“ Who ne’er have felt true passion’s *lasting* sway ;)
“ *Love at first sight* is but a wav’ring fire,
“ Swells at a breath, may at a breath expire.
“ But thou, my life ! my Lord ! my only aim !
“ Didst *at first sight* my raptur’d soul inflame.
“ Nor time nor art can shake that faithful soul,
“ Thy dear idea shall each thought control,
“ And, through each various chance of changing life,
“ Still will I rest thy true, thy constant, wife !”

Scarce had she ceas’d—when from a blasted oak
With threat’ning mien a doughty champion broke.
Proud was his port, accoutred for the field,
Long his stout lance, and broad his cov’ring shield.
Safe as a tortoise peeping from his shell,
Arm’d at all points, his courage seem’d to swell.
A pond’rous helmet on his temples press’d,
A solid cuirass fortified his breast,
O’er arms and thighs the shining plates extend,
Gauntlets his hands, and greaves his legs defend,
Guarded his heel, and no small opening found
Where great ACHILLES felt the deathful wound.
—Fierce to the prince he call’d, in thundering tone,
“ Stop, stop thy speed ! my greater prowess own,

"Yield me the Lady, with respect polite,
 "Or instant here I dare thee to the fight."
 Amazed, SIR GAWAIN, and indignant, said,
 "What wild chimeras fill thy crazy head?
 "What fiend provokes this strange unmanner'd style?
 "Uncourteous knight! or rather, caitiff vile!
 "False traitor thou! of knighthood the disgrace!
 "Thy conduct much belies a noble race,
 "Cased as thou art from head to foot in steel,
 "Quit that protection, and my sharp point feel,
 "Or let me seek at home my armour bright,
 "And meet thee equal in the listed fight."

With milder air, the champion then replies,
 "In foul-mouth'd obloquy no valour lies;
 "Twere easy now to pierce thy guardless heart,
 "But cooler projects shall my tongue impart,
 "Nor will I seem a minister of ill,
 "But well I know a wavering woman's will.
 "* The sportive sex, for ever prone to range,
 "Loves new affections, and delights in change,
 "Beauty, they hold, should never be confin'd,
 "Extensive favours speak a noble mind.
 "And would'st thou stint to *one* that active flame
 "Which glads with genial warmth thy bounteous dame?

* *Femmina è cosa mobil per natura :*

Ond' io so ben ch' un amoroso stato

In cor di donna picciol tempo dura.

PETRARCA, Son.

“ More wide benevolence her smiles premise,
“ More liberal spirit sparkles in her eyes.
“ Go bid old ocean’s vast circumfluous tide
“ Suffer one only favour’d boat to glide,
“ Go bid the general air, the boundless sky,
“ Suffer one only phoenix bird to fly,
“ Go bid that common property the Sun
“ Contract th’ innumerable rays, and cheer but *one* :
“ Has she not been thy warm and willing bride ?
“ —But words are vain—and let herself decide.”

SIR GAWAIN own’d the proposition just,
Nor could he fear his loving wife to trust.
His loving wife alighted to behold
The stranger’s figure and demeanour bold.

As some tall vessel on the sea must rest,
If chance the East wind struggle with the West,
She hesitates, and, with a doubting face,
Compares of each; the stature, size, and grace.
At length, oh strange to say ! she doubts no more,
But flies to him she *never saw before* !

Thus by fresh love is former love undone,
As old plays sleep, while new plays have their run,
As some new law invalidates the past,
And some new fashion frightful makes the last,
As all new ministers the old excel,
* And with new nails we older nails expel !

* Etiam novo quodam amore veterem amorem tanquam clavo clavum
ejiciendum putant. CICERO, Tusc. Quæst. Lib. IV.

The champion smil'd upon this easy prize,
Yet, not content, again he loudly cries,
"I claim the spaniel as my proper right,
"Or instant here I dare thee to the fight."

Heart-struck, the prince, like him our general sire,
From EDEN doom'd in sorrow to retire,
In silence mourn'd at what so late had pass'd.
—His soul rekindling, he replied at last,
"Tis just all parties make election free,
"Thy first proposal I repeat to thee,
"Good fates attend thee with my faithless bride!
"But—let the spaniel for himself decide!"

In vain all blandishments the champion tries,
In vain he whistles, calls, and claps his thighs.
—Like ARGUS worthy of immortal song,
Could CHIAN strains to this dark age belong,
The faithful spaniel, deaf to new commands,
Clings to his lord, and fondly licks his hands!

July, 1796.

ODE

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

LORD KENYON,

CHIEF JUSTICE OF THE COURT OF KING'S BENCH.

*Occasioned by some late Decisions, and particularly One in which
he maintained a different Opinion from Lord*****
concerning Frauds committed at Auctions.*

Εὐνομία δ' εὐκοσμία καὶ ἀρτία παντ' ἀποφαίνει,

Καὶ θαυμά τοις ἀδικοῖς ἀμφιτιθῆσι πέδας,

Τρηχέα λείανει, παύει κόρον, ὑβρίν ἀμαυροί,

Ἀναίρει δ' αὖτις ἀνθεα φθομένα. SOLON.

CHIEF of all wealth Earth's secret womb contains,
Sparkle the diamonds of GOLCONDAN mines;
Chief of all produce from her cultured plains,
* Flow the rich liquors of BURGUNDIAN vines;
And chief of VIRTUES of the human soul,
Impartial JUSTICE shines, whose strict control
Preserving order, and supporting LAW,
The Good with joy uphold—the Bad confess with awe!

* Ἀριστον μὲν ὕδωρ,—says PINDAR, who was perhaps a water-drinker—
The author has deviated from this tenet of the Milesian Philosophy by
preferring good Burgundy.

* Immortal Virgin whofrom heav'n descends
 Man's erring race in social ties to bind!
 The proud she humbles, and the weak defends,
 While rising states harmonious concord find.
 Her sword and balance wait the destin'd hour
 To punish crimes of delegated Power;
 Tho' she entrust the fasces of her sway,
 Chancellors and Kings, appal'd, shall tremble and obey!

† Down from the glittering nail his DORIAN lyre
 If PINDAR took, and felt th' inspiring flame,
 If at his call repair'd th' AONIAN choir
 To praise some victor of th' OLYMPIC game,
 Shall not slight conquests on the dusty field
 To sage decrees of Truth and Wisdom yield?
 Round THERON's brow shall laureate honours twine,
 And not, O KENYON! equal eulogies be thine?

If true the purport of this SABINE strain,
 “† THE MUSE FORBIDS THE VIRTUOUS MAN TO DIE,”
 If verse can still its wonted power maintain,
 And grant the meed of IMMORTALITY;

* Ηδε τε παρθενος εστι δικη Διος εκγεγαυια
 Κυδνη τ' αιδοιη τε θεοις οι Ολυμπον εχουσιν. HESIOD. ERGA.

† αλλα Δωριαν α-

πο φορμιγλα πασσαλου

Λαμβαν

PINDAR, 1 Olymp.

‡ Dignum laude virum Musa vetat mori—HOR. Od. 3. Lib. IV.

Now that all hopes of warlike trophies fail,
 While North and South the GALLIC arms prevail;
 Yet nobler triumphs shall the Muse proclaim,
 And crown INTERIOR WORTH with wreaths of lasting fame!

* Welcome the breeze that fans the sultry swain,
 Or to its port impels the gliding sail;
 Welcome the dews and soft-descending rain
 When blooming flowers empurple every dale;
 But far more welcome is the voice of Praise
 When Gratitude her ready tribute pays,
 When she, a pleas'd remembrance to prolong,
 Dwells on the fav'rite theme, and breathes undying song!

GUARDIAN of MORALS! whose presiding voice
 Awful is heard in these degenerate times;
 No foul adulterer shall in lust rejoice,
 No titled gambler varnish snares and crimes;
 Thine equal eye shall mark the crafty peer,
 And, train'd to fraud, the villain auctioneer;
 Life, honour, property, tho' Heav'n bestow,
 To thee, and thy compeers, their safe delights we owe!

* Εστιν ανθρωποις ανεμων οτε πλειστα
 Χρησις. εστιν δουρανιων υδατων
 Ομβριων, παιδων νεφελαις.
 Ει δε συν πονω τις ευ πρασσοι, μελιγαρυες υμνοι
 Τστερων αρχαι λογων τελλεται,
 Και πιστον ορκιον μεγαλαις αρεταις. PINDAR, 11 Olymp.

For this, while annals can embalm the past,
 Perennial with the wise and good, be found
 Thy name, through long posterity to last,
 While future JUDGES kindle at the sound !
 Thus shall that name remain, like SOLON's great,
 Who, mild yet firm, reform'd th' ATHENIAN state,
 Or his, who, scornful of inglorious rest,
 Form'd to severer toils each manly SPARTAN breast !

—Nor let this plausible strain thine ear offend !
 * SATIRE's strong bolt the Muse at will can throw,
 And she, perchance, no vulgar aid shall lend
 To bring opprobrious Guilt's proud vauntings low.
 She knows to deal her vengeance round the land
 On each bold vice that dares thy power withstand,
 She crimes can scourge, impervious to the Laws,
 And, leagu'd with HEAV'N and THEE, assert fair VIRTUE's
 cause!

* Alluding to some unpublisch'd Satires of the Author.

June, 1796.

To SAMUEL ROGERS, Esq.
ON HIS ORDERING A SHORT GREAT COAT CALLED A
SPENCER.

O precious impe of Fame! SAM ROGERS hight!
Who chauntest MEMORIE in dulcett straine,
Filling our eares and hartes with such delight,
Entraunc'd we live past pleasaunce o'er againe.
This amplest theme, by others minc'd in vaine,
Was by the sacred sisters nyne withheld
Immortal guerdon for thy browes to gaine;
Certes, old HUMBER'S * Bard, and he * who dwell'd
Whylome in daintie LEASOWES, are by thee excell'd!

In *amice* boldlie then thyself *aguize*
Withouten *bases*†, bearing aye the name
Of him who did on MULLA'S banks surprise
The listening worlde with GLORIANA'S fame.
Ne Lord, ne Ladie, christen'd hath the same,
He soares aloft, who did so queintlie *sing*,
And Lords and Ladies crouchen low with shame
Whenas they bootlesse competition bring
To POETS—greater farre than KESAR or than KING!

* MASON'S and SHENSTONE'S Odes to Memory.

† *Bases*—any covering for the *legs*—Glossary.

And could *thilk kirtle* none but *Poets* weare,
 How fewe sich peerlesse garment mought invest,
 Should it, like FLORIMEL's coye belt so rare,
 Start from unworthie sides, "*ungirt, unblest* *!"
 —But SPENSER's genius is by thee possess'd;
 So, as in holie writt yrap't we read,
 The Prophet's robe did on ELISHA rest,
 Of Cloth or Frieze, a SPENSER make with speed,
 And to a SPENSER's high renowne eftsoones succeed!

March, 1795.

TO A FRIEND IN LOVE, AND WRITING SONNETS.

FLORIO! if thou would'st gain the Fair,
 Write not—but *sigh*, and *kneel*, and *swear*!
 Women can make a bold resistance
 'Gainst missile weapons from a distance,
 But, foot to foot, and hand to hand,
 They yield, nor can the fight withstand,
 As VENUS bow'd her fainting head,
 O'ercome by gallant DIOMED!

One *tear*, by their soft eyes beheld,
 Does more than *verse* to volumes swell'd!
 One *kiss* is worth all WALLER's rhyme,
 One *squeeze*—all MILTON's strain sublime!

July, 1795.

* Fie on the man that did it first invent,
 To shame us all, with this *ungirt, unblest*. Faery Q. B. IV. Canto 5.

REFORMATION AND PUNISHMENT.

FROM THE SPANISH.

"CASARÁS Y AMANSARÁS."

REFRANES de MAL LARA.

IN the city which fugitives built in the sea,
 When by ATTILA forced to retire;
 Where first a few fishermen sought to be free,
 Ere its palaces learn'd to aspire;
 ANTONIO resided, whose ancestors long
 Were recorded in annals of gold*:
 The youth was in body both handsome and strong,
 His mind was presumptuous and bold.

The man well-dispos'd but too rarely is seen,
 If indulgence corrupted the child,
 And froward and haughty he always had been,
 Nor e'er was complacent and mild.
 His pride was to have, and that praise he enjoy'd,
 Like HERCULES sinews and bone;
 But they ne'er were in labours of virtue employ'd,
 For to mischief he ever was prone.

Delighting at all times his prowess to show,
 He was fear'd by the country around;
 A rib or an arm he could break with a blow,
 Or could knock a man down to the ground.

* IL LIBRO D'ORO, in which the Noble Venetians were registered.

And, in cities and towns, when his terrible rage
No antagonist dared to inflame,
A bear or wild boar he could fiercely engage,
And the mountains resounded his fame !

His father, humanely, in sorrow complain'd
That in vain he had lavish'd his care,
And the grief of a parent could ne'er be restrain'd,
When he thought of so savage an heir.
Some method he anxiously studied to find,
To reclaim this refractory son,
And he now, for it constantly tortured his mind,
All schemes had exhausted ——— SAVE ONE.

So at night, when ANTONIO, a little ashamed,
Had return'd from some recent disgrace ;
Thus the tender old man with affection exclaim'd,
While the tears bath'd his reverend face :
—— “ Soon, soon, must my fond eyes be closed in death,
“ And my sorrowful heart cease to beat ;
“ But this only, my son ! ere I yield my last breath,
“ This I ask, I command, I entreat.”

—— “ What is it ? ” — ANTONIO abruptly replied,
In his manner impatient and rude.
His father knew well it was useless to chide,
And his mild supplication renew'd.

—“Thou livest at random, like beasts of the field,
“And to thee all my honours descend;
“No longer to me any pleasure they yield,
“If in thee all those honours must end.

“I wish thee at length to show some signs of grace,
“And adopt a new system of life;
“’Tis incumbent on thee to continue my race,
“By espousing a suitable WIFE.
“This only from future misfortunes can save,
“And ’tis time that thy frolics should cease.
“—Oh! let me, before I go down to the grave,
“See thee *settled* in honour and peace!”

“—Dear father!” then answer’d this troublesome youth,
“Obey you I will, if I can,
“But in *Love*, as in *Arms*, to confess the plain truth,
“I am always a powerful man.
“For my strength and my vigour are such, if to wed,
“For your fancy I now should agree,
“All the wives which King SOLOMON took to his bed
“Would scarce be sufficient for me.

“Besides that I hold it too abject and mean
“To be govern’d by one woman’s will:
“In faith, if you wish me to marry—a *Queen*,
“I must have variety still.

“ But this source of your teasing complaints to remove,
“ (Since others there are in great plenty)
“ To your orders I more than obedient will prove,
“ Not *one* wife shall you give me—but TWENTY !”

The father at this—in the midst of his tears,
Can scarcely from laughter refrain ;
Such courage most rash and advent'rous appears,
But he yields—his first purpose to gain.
Good-humour'd he answers—“ To this I consent,
“ For rather than not see you wed,
“ As I wish that we both may have perfect content,
“ You TWENTY shall take to your bed.

“ But so many at once—unacquainted with sin,
“ Young and handsome—'tis hard to provide !
——“ And were it not better, my son ! to begin
“ Your career with *ONE* amiable bride ?
“ I have one in my eye, who like thee is well born,
“ She is lovely and just in her prime ;
“ So make her thy own at first blush of the morn,
——“ And the rest we shall find in good time.”

ANTONIO consented—perform'd were the rites,
And he led to his home the fair maid.
—Then quickly was wrought—by his *nuptial delights*,
The REFORM which so long was delay'd.

Overcome by new cares, render'd heartless and weak
By daily contention and strife,
His high spirit broken, no lamb was more meek
Than he—to his TERMAGANT WIFE !

Some days had elaps'd when his father return'd,
And said to him moaning in grief,
“—O my son ! let thy sorrowful gloom be adjourn'd,
“ For I bring thee an instant relief.
“ Thou knows't I am always indulgent and kind,
“ And true to my promise am reckon'd,
“ If thy first fair companion be not to thy mind,
“ Already I bring thee—a SECOND.

“ In a week or a month I'll procure thee—a THIRD,
“ If so long should continue thy spleen ;
“ Then a FOURTH—for I cannot prove false to my word,
“ And, in time—all the other SIXTEEN !”
——“ O father, too kind, and too cruel ! depart !”
Cried ANTONIO, in furious disgust,
“ For these WEDDINGS ETERNAL will soon break my heart,
——“ Let me die, and lie down in the dust !”

—ANTONIO, grown wise, in the course of few years,
Did posts of high dignity grace ;
In robes senatorial he shone with his peers,
And took at the council his place.

When before them a wretch some one chanc'd to arraign,
 Who of horrible crimes stood accus'd;
 Who had plunder'd a church, who his father had slain,
 And his sister in incest abus'd.

Some pronounc'd—"Let the villain be hang'd in the air!"
 Others—"No, let him perish by fire!"
 One said—"Let four horses his live members tear!"
 And one—"Let him starving expire!"
 Thus, while each had a various opinion to say,
 They debated, and slow judgment tarried.
 —ANTONIO roar'd loud—"Take the villain away,
 "And let him this instant be—MARRIED!"

April, 1797.

EPIGRAM.

ON A DOMESTIC ARRANGEMENT.

JOHN calls his wife his *better half*;
 His place so oft is fill'd by RALPH,
 But *half* of her he has, 'tis true:
 The house and carriage JOHN supplies,
 RALPH nothing pays—for which the wise
 Think JOHN's the *worst half of the two*!

THE LOVER'S CONSOLATION.

IN IMITATION OF MALHERBE.

" Si des maux renaissans avec ma patience
N'ont pouvoir d'arreter un esprit si hautain."

If sighs nor vows from that proud mind
Affection's soft return procure;
By TIME shall I indifference find,
The cure, tho' tardy, yet is sure.
TIME from my breast it's grief shall steal,
And TIME perchance avenge my wrong.
(If joy in vengeance I can feel
On one so fair, and lov'd so long.)

For shalt not thou, when years are past,
Be rank'd with envious ancient maids?
Not long th' ungather'd rose can last,
But on its stem forsaken fades.
Or some stern husband shall be thine,
With gentle flames untaught to glow;
In broils domestic thou shalt pine
Till Death release thee from the woe!

To thee severe, the nuptial God
Shall chase the charms I now adore;
Like flowers by passing footsteps trod,
Which sink in dust, and bloom no more!

Thy froward children round shall cry,
 Nor one calm hour of peace allow;
 Then from those eyes their suns shall fly,
 And clouds remain upon thy brow!

Then I, in wealth and honours blest,
 If chance I meet thee in decline,
 (For Hope assures this ardent breast
 That wealth and honours will be mine)
 May thus exclaim, in sober truth,
 Nor drop a tear, nor heave a sigh,
 —“How fair this woman was in youth,
 “And what a fool in youth was I!”

July, 1794.

EPIGRAM.

ON A FLY, IN A LADY'S EYE.

SUCH are the triumphs of MIRANDA'S eyes,
 At every glance some fated victim dies!
 In the full city LOVE'S despairing train,
 Sigh for her charms, and sigh alas! in vain.
 In fields and gardens *Flies* are not secure,
 Whole swarms those dangerous orbs to death allure!
 All pains but *Love* she feels—what wonder then
 For *Flies* the fair one *weeps*—but not for *Men*?

HORACE, IN CASSIUM SEVERUM,
IMITATED.

To an impudent Fellow, who pretends to be a Satirist.

THOU CUR ! whose ceaseless yelping cries
Th' innoxious traveller assail,
But, if the grinning wolf arise,
Turn'st with convenient speed thy tail.
Darest thou at me to howl and bark ?
Long may'st thou howl and bark in vain!
I unappal'd thy malice mark,
For I am arm'd—to bite again.

Like mastiff fierce, or swifter hound,
With ear erect I trace my prey ;
No depth of snows, no craggy mound
One moment checks my fearless way.
Then if, while prowling far and near,
Some bone allure thy hungry sense;
Ware ! Ware !—to such as *thee* severe,
Sharp horns I bear for just defence.

I, like ARCHILOCHUS, in rage
Can bid the keen Iambics flow,
I, like HIPPONAX, war can wage,
In verse a wild and deadly foe !
Gainst *me*, when Spite and Dulness join'd,
Their weak, tho' venom'd, teeth employ,
Say, shall I harmless sit resign'd,
An unreveng'd and weeping *boy* ?

June, 1796.

FROM THE GREEK OF
SIMONIDES.

PRESERVED IN DION. HAL. DE STRUCT. ORAT.

HIGH swell'd the wave, and raged the stormy wind,
When the pale Mother saw her woes begun ;
Around her darling boy her arms she twin'd,
And weeping cried—" O PERSEUS ! O my son !

" What are *my* woes ! how fast *my* sorrows stream !

" Yet, on this frail-built bark, this seat unblest,

" Beneath the gath'ring clouds, the moon's wan beam,

" *Thou* sleep'st secure—*thy* little heart's at rest !

" Thou hear'st not now the wild and bursting wave,

" That with rude sprinkling wets thy tender hair ;

" Thou hear'st not these infuriate blasts which rave,

" While purple vestments wrap thy features fair !

" But should at length thy weak frame shrink with fear,

" Sweet babe ! be mine the task, with accents mild,

" To lull thy griefs, and sooth thy gentle ear,

" And whisper thus—" Sleep, softly sleep, my child !

—" O would the sea and Persecution *sleep* !

" That these tremendous ills at length may pause ;

" Hear me, O Jove ! embolden'd while I weep,

" May this lov'd boy avenge my helpless cause !"

March, 1797.

ON DINING WITH A GENTLEMAN,

*Who had purchased a fine Edition of ANACREON, whose
Odes he wished his Friends to imitate in English.*

SPIRIT of the GRECIAN MUSE!

Not thy swelling EPIC vein,
Not thy THEBAN flights I choose,
But thy TEIAN lighter strain!

Round HILARIO's social board,
Let the LYRIC transport rise!
Be those golden days restored
When the *Gay* eclipsed the *Wise*!

Let the GALLIC juice go round,
Bright as CHIOS e'er could boast!
Let each burning bosom bound,
Bound with rapture at the TOAST!

Fancy shall awake the dead;
Orgies wild the night employ!
—See ANACREON rears his head,
Shakes his silver beard with joy!

“What,” he cries, “are Wealth and Power?
“What the reasoning pride of schools?
—“Equal trifles of an hour!
“Leave such empty cares to fools!

" Vain are MEMORY's vaunted treasures,
 " Dreams of HOPE fallacious prove;
 " Seize, O seize on *present* pleasures,
 * " *Mad with Wine—and mad with Love!*

" Such my passage to the tomb,
 " 'Twas a grape-stone stopp'd my breath;
 " But could I have chose my doom,
 " I had died—a sweeter death †!"

October, 1798.

THE FADED ROSE.

*Intended as an Answer to some beautiful but melancholy Lines
 in the Third IDYLLIUM of MOSCHUS.*

Ἀρμεις ὄοι μεγάλοι, καὶ καρτεροὶ ἢ σοφοὶ ἄνδρες,
 Ὅποτε πρῶτα θάνωμες, ἀνακτοὶ ἐν χθονὶ κοίλα
 Εὐδομες εὐ μάλα μακρὸν ἀτερμονα νηγρετον ὑπνον.

A ROSE that hung on JULIA's breast,
 By all her fostering kindness blest,
 Shone with attractive power;
 Such fragrance as her breath supplies,
 A bloom her cheek alone outvies,
 Adorn'd this happy flower.

* Θελω θελω μανθῆναι. ANACREON.

† *Perhaps* the old voluptuary means the death desired by OVID. AMOR.
 Lib. II. Eleg. 10.

At length it droop'd its languid head,
And JULIA saw its beauties fled;
I felt the fair-one's pain:
And, while we mourn'd its withering bloom,
Methought, the ROSE's last perfume
Breath'd thus the moral strain.

" Grieve not for me—thy stronger frame
" Must join the dust, from whence it came,
" As fade the flowers of Spring.
" O MAN! thy boasted strength of years
" To sage Reflection's view appears
" Flown with as swift a wing!

" O MAN! each genial Spring renews
" Myriads of odours, forms, and hues,
" As fugitive as mine.
" New suns shall set, new blooms shall fade,
" When in oblivious earth is laid
" The pride that now is thine!

" Yet shall the Soul escape the tomb,
" And with perennial beauty bloom
" 'Mid yon celestial plains;
" Where God's own glory gives the day,
" Unsetting Sun, whose living ray
" Th' immortal Flower sustains!"

July, 1795.

ODE

*Written for an Entertainment given by ROGER PALMER,
Esq. to some emigrant French Ladies, at the Close of the
Year 1794.*

Τὸ σημερον μελει μοι
Τὸ δαυριον τις οιδεν; ANACREON.

PALMER! now the golden sun
Through his annual course hath run,
See the park, an alter'd scene,
Change to white its livery green!
Say, shall we, to Grief a prey,
Sigh the precious hours away?
Now we meet another year,
Mourn the past—the future fear?

Man's of Fate, or Chance, the sport,
Grief is long, and Pleasure short;
* Man, the weeping sages cry,
Soon as born begins to die.
—Yet let graver fools repine,
Joy be yours, and joy be mine!
Seize the good the Times allow,
Make the most of present NOW!

* Ημεῖς γὰρ ὁπότε ἤρχομεθα ζῆν, τὸτ ἀποθνησκομεν.

DIOG. LAERT. de THEOPHRAST.

What tho' we have seen of late
Strange vicissitudes of Fate,
Deeds with which all EUROPE rings,
Kings turn'd coblers, coblers Kings!
Sans Culotes, whom Wealth bewitches,
Envious of *the Dutchmen's breeches!*
BRITAIN shamed, and PITT outwitted,
† JUDGES *tried*, and TOOKE *acquitted!*

Yet for us enough remains,
WIT's bon mots, and MUSIC's strains;
Breathing canvas decks thy walls,
PAINTING there attention calls,
Forms which learn'd CARACCI drew,
VERONESE's gaudier hue!
—But, to light up stronger flames,
Bring the gay PARISIAN DAMES!

They in grief can smile serene,
They can banish BRITISH spleen,
Spleen that constant here we find,
Clouds of sky, and clouds of mind!

† This ill-advised and ridiculous prosecution, which seemed to burlesque our legal proceedings, appeared more like a *Trial* of the *Judges* than of the *Parties accused*—Should a Government ever bring forward such *serious* charges without a *certainty* of evidence sufficient to obtain conviction?

They can livelier lessons give,
They can teach us—how to live;
Sportive, “blithe and debonnair,”
Live to LOVE, and laugh at CARE!

What tho’ FACTION’s voice of thunder
Bursts all former ties asunder;
Tho’ the rous’d Plebeian rage
Worse than tyrant wars can wage;
’Tho’ the fear-struck minions moan
Trembling round each tottering throne;
Loyal we to BEAUTY’s reign,
Still that RIGHT DIVINE maintain!

Let thy fertile fancy work,
Draw the curtains—draw the cork!
Spite of Frost, that rules below,
Roses here on cheeks shall blow,
Nor the Fair-one’s eyes, in vain,
Sparkle like thy bright *Champagne*!
—Thus the blended joys we prove,
Joys of TASTE, of WINE, and LOVE!

December, 1794.

A SONG UPON OGLING.

LET me MIRANDA meet to-morrow !

I ask not eloquence, or wit ;
Nor *point* from SHERIDAN I'll borrow,
Nor *flowers* from BURKE, nor *force* from PITT !
Let them, in aid of Power or Faction,
The Senate's loud applause command ;
While I, resign'd to sweet distraction,
Will silent press that gentle hand !

For *mute* shall be my adoration,
And *mute* shall be the Fair's reply :
Expressive yet our conversation,
And full of meaning—through the eye !
Eyes can entreat, and eyes can languish,
Hers may consent, when *mine* shall sue ;
And eyes, which tell the Lover's anguish,
Can tell the Lover's raptures too !

Let both, with tender looks entrancing,
Combine the pupil's meeting rays !
Let both, with keen and amorous glancing,
Be lost in the infectious gaze !
Let both, at times, when, close inspected,
All the bright orb is well discern'd,
See their own images reflected ;
Emblem of soft desires return'd !

58 TO A LADY, SITTING FOR HER PICTURE.

While each, the other's soul surveying
Through those clear crystals of the mind,
Reading each thought, each thought conveying,
Leaves every meaner care behind,
Where are the "*winged words*" * imparting
With half such power inflamed desire?
—Through hands conjoin'd impetuous darting,
Not swifter flies th' **ELECTRIC FIRE!**

June, 1798.

TO A LADY, SITTING FOR HER PICTURE.

COULD I, in *Wax* thy features mould,
On *Canvas* to thy charms be just,
Rival PRAXITELES of old
In *Bronze*, or *Marble*, for thy *Bust*;
The *Wax*, the *Canvas*, *Bronze*, and *Stone*
Should, *all*, thy matchless beauties own!

But *colder Artists* these employ,
Such coarse materials **Love** disdains:
To form thy image, Nymph too coy!
A surer, *happier*, mode remains.
MIRA! on thy sweet self let *me*
A *living likeness* stamp of **THEE!**

April, 1795.

* ΕΠΕΑ ΠΤΕΡΟΕΝΤΑ—from HOMER, the title of M^r. HORNE TOOKE's elaborate work on Language.

ON NOVEL-WRITING,

TO A LADY AT BATH.

Not content with those triumphs which ever arise
 From the smile of your lips, from the glance of your eyes;
 Not content to enchant, like RAUZZINI's full choir,
 Like a syren's soft voice, like old ORPHEUS's lyre;
 What ardour, LOUISA! your bosom inflames,
 To rival the labours of *blue-stocking* Dames!
 —Such Dames I have known—but, your pardon I beg,
 The stocking not always sate well on the leg;
 Nor, tho' anger and spleen in their bosoms may rankle,
 Was the calf better shaped, or more slender the ankle!

Yet in regions of FANCY 'tis own'd that a BELLE
Man's gross and dull intellect oft can excel;
 So your wit, in a NOVEL, you safe may display,
 Provided you hit—*the true taste of the day!*

For could you the heights of great RICHARDSON climb,
 That dignified painter of morals sublime!
 Were the genius correct, but less daring, your lot,
 Which FIELDING possess'd—or his skill in a plot*;
 Could the reader through all your production discern
 The humour of SMOLLET, or pathos of STERNE;
 These are not enough—we must have something *more*,
 And higher, still higher, your fancy must soar!

* TOM JONES is perhaps the most perfect *plot* that was ever contrived
 in any age or country, all the incidents leading admirably, though imper-
 ceptibly, to the final discovery.

With RADCLIFFE all limits of Reason disdain,
 While astonishment curdles the blood in each vein;
 Describe, tho' no mortal can tell what you mean,
 Such *manners*, such *prospects*—as never were seen !
 Such *men* and such *women*—as God never made !
 And put the whole earth in *one great masquerade* !
 Then give us, like LEWIS, still more to succeed,
 Some *Devil* that *ogles*, some *Nun* that can *bleed* !
 You are sure to *delight*, if you can but *amaze*,
 Tho' you whirl us along—with a *ghost* in a *chaise* !
 Through *three volumes*, at least, thus courageously dash on,
 For NATURE and TRUTH are now—*quite out of fashion* !
 January, 1797.

EPIGRAM

*On a fantastical fat old Woman, dancing at Bath, with a
 Girdle, which had this Motto embroidered on it :*
 “ A LA SUSANNE.”

SUCH ugliness may be protection
 From any indiscreet affection,
 Nor fear a lover's oaths ;
 'Tis not SUSANNA here you see :
 A *baffled Elder* it may be
 Who stole the Lady's clothes !

ELEGY

To a Friend who has an Estate in the WEST INDIES, confined in LONDON, in the Spring of the Year 1795.

Quippe LUE hac nascente, putem simul omnia diras
EUMENIDAS cecinisse fera et crudelia nobis.

FRACASTORIUS.

- “ SWIFT are ye fled!—ye joys which late beguiled
“ My festive moments in the crowded scene,
“ When on old THAMES’S banks AUGUSTA smiled,
“ He King of floods! and she of cities Queen!
“ Too swiftly fled!—nor can I now regain
“ The classic dinner, the convivial hour,
“ The Tragic stole, THALIA’S sportive vein,
“ Beauty’s soft smile, and Music’s melting power!
“ While far remote inconstant Pleasure flies,
“ ’Mid fields and groves the tardy Summer chides,
“ With panting breast the gelid ocean tries,
“ In trim walks saunters, or on wild cliffs rides.
“ Mournful I wait the slow return of HEALTH,
“ Forbade from these deserted streets to roam,
“ Muse how defenceless our COLONIAL wealth,
“ And hear the famish’d poor lament at home!”

Thus sighs my friend—yet let the moral lay
Thine active mind with sage reflection fill,
Chase Spleen’s dark mists with intellectual ray,
And show how Heav’n with good attempers ill

Nor doth some tenant of the cloister'd cells,
 Some bigot priest, the moral lay prolong;
 But one like thee, in whose warm bosom dwells
 An equal love of Pleasure and of Song.

For thee COLUMBUS' daring genius steer'd
 His trackless course beneath an unknown sky,
 Till a new world the bold explorer cheer'd,
 Whence springs the wealth thy teeming canes supply.

* For thee, alas! that baneful pest he found
 Whose dire effects thy wounded frame annoy;
 That baneful pest, which spreads, the globe around,
 Years of repentance for a moment's joy!

Lest man should find a Paradise below,
 With GOTHIC night when beams of SCIENCE strove;
 Some fatal Power, soft Pleasure's deadly foe,
 Infused his poison in the cup of LOVE.

Tho' by the zealot's frowning brow disdain'd,
 E'en the chaste Muse bewails the Monarch's doom,
 Whose arm DA VINCI's fainting head sustain'd!
 Who hung poetic wreaths on LAURA's tomb!

“ † What can to me a court's proud circle bring
 “ Without the joy the blooming Fair bestows?
 “ —A gloomy year, without the cheerful Spring,
 “ Or a cold Spring, without its pride—the rose!”

* This may be a disputed point, but the popular opinion is here adhered to.

† Francis I. was the first sovereign who received Ladies at his court—
 “ Car,” disoit il, “ une cour sans femmes est une année sans printems, et
 un printems sans roses.” Vie de Francois I. par M. GAILLARD.

Thus spoke the gallant King, in youth elate,
 And Beauty's bloom his polish'd court adorns.
 —In anguish tortured, he confess'd too late
 The Spring hath blights, and roses have their thorns.

Cold on his bier the gallant King was seen,
 Whose various praise admiring nations own'd ;
 Then mourn'd the Loves, then wept the CYPRIAN Queen,
 And with deep sighs her martyr'd minion moan'd !

Father of Letters ! and of Arts the friend !
 The Warrior's glory ! and the Statesman's pride !
 These shall to latest years his fame defend,
 Tho' FRANCIS by inglorious conflicts died !

—And not for this high Heav'n's decrees arraign ;
 E'en this can stimulate to wiser ends,
 Curb loose desire, and point to HYMEN's fane,
 Where sensual bliss on VIRTUE's self attends.

There bend thy course, with self-corrected aim :
 The genial God a purer torch shall bear,
 And gentler Cupids, hovering round the flame,
 Unpoison'd arrows for thy breast prepare !

*" Nel resto, buona notte ! perche è tardi,
 E d'aver mal Francese ogn'un si guardi !"*

La FRANCEIDE di LALLI.

June, 1795.

ODE TO THE NORTH STAR.

COMPOSED ON HORSEBACK.

STAR OF THE NORTH ! who o'er the glimmering glades
From Heav'ns deep azure shedd'st thy guiding ray,
While sportive Fairies haunt the twilight shades,
And Fancy sings a requiem to the day !

THEE, ever fix'd, the Muse shall now invoke,
Nor court, tho' loved at times, the wandering Moon;
* Awhile let " CYNTHIA check her dragon yoke,"
Nor rise, to chase the sacred gloom too soon !

While, wrapp'd in thought, I trust th' unfaltering steed,
Nor more his weary sides, impatient, goad;
The loitering Muse my careless step shall lead,
And Verse beguile my solitary road.

No sound shall pierce the stillness of the gale,
Save PHILOMEL may deign her song to pour;
Nor shalt thou, GUIDING STAR ! o'er *me* prevail
To pass the bourn where *she* is heard no more !

* While CYNTHIA checks her dragon yoke
Gently o'er th' accustom'd oak.

MILTON's Penseroso.

Far from the sun is placed that cheerless bourn,
What can to *me* in those cold climes belong,
If fond Remembrance doom me still to mourn
The depth of woods, and melodies of song?

But there—toward HYMEN'S ever-open gate,
With swifter pace let panting LOVERS fly,
While Hopes and Fears on blushing Beauty wait,
The tear of rapture, and the yielding sigh!

With eager haste *they* urge their burning wheels,
Their bursting veins with keen desires are swell'd,
While the dark night each amorous theft conceals,
And the last, blissful, joy is scarce withheld!

—Yet oh, forbear!—await the witness'd vow,
And curb the sallies of impetuous Youth;
So shall long years the licens'd bliss avow,
And female Constancy reward your truth!

And still for those, by genuine passion led
From sordid guardians, and reluctant sires,
May lasting pleasures crown the genial bed,
And Love unquench'd preserve his wonted fires!

But for the base deceiver's fraudulent art
Taught by cold lucre warm desires to feign,
May broils domestic rend his callous heart,
And fell Remorse pursue the venal swain!

—At length my eye the envious CYNTHIA sees
 Emerging slow to her proud height aspire—
 And now she glows, amid yon tufted trees,
 Like that ARABIAN bird, his nest on fire !

And now——LOV'D STAR ! thy paler lustre fades,
 That guides the *mariner's*, and *lover's*, way ;
 That o'er tempestuous waves, and glimmering glades,
 From Heav'n's deep azure sheds a friendly ray !

September, 1795.

ON AN ANCHOR, WORN BY A LADY.

YE POETS ! praise BELINDA'S cross no more,
 ' Which Jews might kiss, and infidels adore.'
 A happier ornament see MIRA wear,
 Emblem of HOPE that bids you—*not despair* !
 O'er those soft *seas* her bright eyes dart their ray,
 Like friendly stars which lead the pilot's way ;
 And CUPIDS, like the floating halcyons, bold,
 Spread their light wings, and wanton uncontrol'd !
 —Who does not wish to launch where Pleasure guides
 The sportive votary on such tempting tides ?
 Who does not sigh to bid adieu to care,
 Furl every sail——and cast his *anchor* there ?

October, 1795.

ELEGY

TO A LADY, ON HER LEAVING HARROWGATE.

Now on each grove the saddening tints appear,
Loose fly the eddying leaves before the gale ;
The sportsman's clamour stuns each gentler ear,
And all th' innoxious rural pleasures fail.

And lo ! to LONDON summoning the gay,
FASHION's proud mandates are resistless found ;
As clanging cymbals vernal bees obey,
When, clustering, they their humming Queen surround !

Or thick, as when, at the SATANIC call
Throng'd numberless the incorporeal race ;
Filling, O envied power ! the blazing hall,
* With shapes reduced—for want of ampler space.

—Such are the crowds to which you now repair,
Such are the joys your evening toilette claims,
Where clashing chariots fright th' encumber'd square,
And the hoarse servants shout the endless names.

* Thus incorporeal spirits to smallest forms
Reduced their shapes immense, and were at large.

PARADISE LOST, Book I.

If they were *incorporeal* what occasion had they to *reduce their shapes* ?
—But the want of this faculty of MILTON's Devils must be often regretted
in LONDON, where the houses are in general but little calculated to contain
the numbers who are invited to them.

Like "*Naphtha* and *Asphaltus*," tapers blaze,
Grateful the lustre, grateful is the heat,
While sounds confused all well-bred ears amaze
Of "*dulcet symphonies*," and "*voices sweet* !"

—Yet, when I late that giddy round pursued ;
Amid the bright assembly's gaudy show,
Oft would this secret, meddling, thought intrude,
—To *all* we bow—alas ! how *few* we know !

Far other joy, ere civil discord grew,
Bade *GALLIC* roofs resound with festive glee,
When Friendship, gladdening the selected few,
Knit in close bonds the sprightlier *COTERIE*.

Our cold reserve impedes that social tie ;
In summer haunts capricious modes we blend,
We meet the stranger with averted eye,
And hail the slight acquaintance as a friend !

Thee shall transparent *NIDD*'s meand'ring waves,
And *PLUMPTON*'s rocks, which garden shrubs adorn,
Thee *HAREWOOD*'s bowers, and *KNARESBRO*'s desert caves,
With fading flowers, and plaintive echoes, mourn !

But, while those charms for wider sway prepare,
I loiter still by this salubrious well,
More pleased to wander wild in northern air,
Than mid a city's baleful smoke to dwell.

—And here the graver toil of ancient lore
 With frolic sports of modern Mirth unites,
 * As oft, apart, my curious thoughts explore
 The time-worn monuments of DRUID rites.

The white-robed bands, in imaged pomp, renew
 Their lustral waters, and their holy fires,
 Collect from sacred boughs the balmy dew,
 Or tune to solemn sounds their awful lyres!

Such as in shades, mysterious, dark, and deep,
 † MASSILIA's haunted groves did once enclose!
 Such as on † MONA's wave-encircled steep
 Breath'd their loud curses on intruding foes!

—And *real* forms, in this promiscuous throng,
 With swift progression catch my musing eyes!
 Like hasty waves, propelling waves along,
 Or BANQUO's shadowy progeny they rise!

Another, and another, still succeeds,
 New *Beaux* divert us, and new *Beauties* shine,
 While in each feature SPECULATION reads
 What *characters* in motley groupes combine.

* There are many rock-basons and other Druidical remains in the neighbourhood of Harrowgate—on their uses, &c. the reader may consult BORLASE's Antiquities of Cornwall.

† Lucus erat longo nunquam violatus ab ævo, &c. LUCAN. Lib. 9.

‡ See TACIT. Ann. Lib. 14.

By some, ESTEEM, some LOVE, some PITY's claim'd, —
 On some, DERISION turns her scornful sneer.
 —Rapid they pass—and ere true judgment's framed,
 Like a false vision fly—nor more appear !

Emblem of human life !—so short the view——
 This sad reflection prompts the mournful sigh.
 —Whate'er in ampler ranges we pursue,
 So soon we flourish—and so soon we die !

This, when from hence congenial minds depart,
 With deeper anguish swells the Poet's moan,
 While pensive Sorrow wounds the suffering heart,
 To pine in crowds—*unsocial*, and *alone* !

October, 1795.

EPIGRAM

*On a purse-proud insolent Man who had made a large
 Fortune in the East Indies.*

POMPOSO still boasts of his *Lacks* of *Rupees*;
 When he swaggers, with airs of importance, 'tis fit,
 Other *Lacks* be allow'd him in union with these,
Vast Lacks of *Good-breeding*, *Discernment*, and *Wit* !

ELEGY

*On an unfortunate Female meeting with a Gentleman who
resembled her Seducer.*

" But still I see the tenor of MAN's woe
Holds on the same, from WOMAN to begin."
—" From man's *effeminate* slackness it begins,"
Said th' angel, " who should better hold his place,
" By wisdom and superior gifts receiv'd."

PARADISE LOST, Book II.

- " HUNGRY and poor, despairing and forlorn,
" A houseless wretch, I roam the darkening street;
" The pale lamp, glimmering, points me out to scorn,
" While on my head the churlish tempests beat.
- " Hard are the fortunes of the village maid,
" Small her protection from alluring sin,
" Her genuine feelings easily betray'd ;
" Vice storms without—and Passion lurks within !
- " Curst be the trappings of the soldier's pride,
" His glittering ornaments, and martial air,
" If from the deathful field he turn aside
" To war at home on the defenceless Fair !
- " His dazzling gorget, and his helmed brows
" Caught my weak heart—I was not won by pelf—
" I view'd his manly grace, I heard his vows,
" And simply thought him honest as myself.

“ I bore a child—but as th’ untimely rose

“ Shrinks from the nipping wind, ere fully blown,

“ The tender infant felt its mother’s woes,

“ Nor lived, sad comfort! to sustain its own.

“ Scared at the rattling coach, th’ unusual crowd,

“ I now with sighs my tranquil cot deplore;

“ The vicious o’er my shame exult aloud,

“ The silent virtuous bar th’ unopening door.

“ O dire effect of want!—for sordid hire

“ To meet the passing stranger’s loath’d embrace;

“ If any view, with casual, coarse, desire,

“ The weak attractions of this faded face.

“ But who art thou, who stop’st my frantic way?

“ Wouldst thou too taunt me with the bitter jest?

“ Seek’st thou of burning Lust the patient prey?

—“ Or glows soft PITY in thy gentler breast?

—“ Ah, lineaments of him I fondly loved!

“ To my warm heart thy cherish’d form I strain.

—“ Ah, lineaments of him who faithless proved!

“ That sad remembrance fires my maddening brain!

“ Thou weep’st!—Thou art not of the vulgar kind!

“ Are then thy loose desires subdued by grief?

—“ O teach my erring step the path to find

“ Where Penitence may hope, and gain, relief!”

—Of different sex the human race was made,
 Each for the other, by benignant Heav'n;
 To tread Life's thorny path with mutual aid,
 One for support, and one for solace giv'n.

How Vice and Folly thwart the high behest
 When each the other studies to betray!

—When artifice prevails in either breast,
 United ruin blends the mutual prey.

Reason, faint-glimmering, in the *female* mind,
 More soft, more frail, may waver and expire;
 In *Man*, for stronger energy design'd,
 Her lamp should shine with more enduring fire.

As bends the willow to the summer gale,
 So *Woman* yields to Flattery's guileful strain;
 As stands the oak, when wintry blasts assail,
 So, fix'd in VIRTUE's soil, should *Man* remain.

Woman's by every breath of Passion tost,
 By *Man* should all its fiercest storms be braved;
 *—"The *Woman* who deliberates is lost,"
 But *Man*, if *he* deliberate, is saved!

* ADDISON'S CATO.—The author does not affect the airs of too rigid a moralist, but he thinks that, first to seduce, and then to abandon, an innocent girl, is a crime which none but a hardened villain can commit, if he *deliberates* enough to consider the consequences.

March, 1796.

AN AFRICAN SONG.

RECITATIVE.

O BLEST HUMANITY! what wreaths are thine!
 On AFRIC's sands, beneath the burning Line,
 E'en on a sable cheek *thy* simple tear
 Outshines the diamond callous fools revere!
 E'en from a barbarous tongue *thine* artless strains
 Surpass the music of ITALIAN plains!
 —When savage breasts with generous feelings glow,
 Let polish'd EUROPE fame's bright meed bestow!
 Ye Fair! for tender sympathy admired,
 List to the song HUMANITY inspired!

AIR.

* The wind of the desert was high,
 The rains made the rivers o'erflow,
 The thunder was heard from the sky,
 And the wild beasts were roaring below.

* IMPROVISO verses are sung by the wild nations of AFRICA as well as by the polished Italians—Mr. PARK, who is lately returned from that country, relates that he was found in an exhausted state under a tree, by a party of negroes, who took him to their hut, and relieved his wants, singing an extemporary song, in which they all joined in chorus—The song was sim-

The *white man*, who came o'er the sea,
Stood aghast at the terrible sound;
Then laid his limbs under a tree,
And rested his head on the ground.

We are never by grief overcome,
We know not what 'tis to repine,
We dance to the sound of the drum,
And the palm-tree supplies us with wine.
We have bees which in multitudes swarm,
We have herds which in wide pastures roam,
We have huts which defy the rude storm;
—But the *white man* is far from his home!

As the tamarind's leaves to the sun
Expand, and are closed at night,
With the morn are our revels begun,
And we sleep in the absence of light:
In the chase we are active and bold,
Our arrows fly rarely in vain,
We are wealthy in cotton and gold;
—But the *white man* is poor and in pain!

ple and pathetic—"The wind blew, the thunder roared, and the white man
"was sitting under a tree; he had no mother to provide his milk, no wife to
"grind his corn, let us have compassion on the white man."—These ideas
are here a little expanded, and the concluding couplet is added, because
according to Mr. PARK's account, these negroes had never before seen a
white man, and they at first started back with disgust and a kind of horror.

Despairing he wept, and he sigh'd,
 As we found him, all faint and forlorn;
 * No *mother* his milk to provide,
 No *wife* to make bread of his corn!
 O let us in pity unite
 To soften his woes, if we can:
 What tho' he be *ugly* and *white*,
 My comrades—HE STILL IS A MAN!

1798.

EPIGRAM.

Spoken extempore at the first Representation of a Tragedy.

How great your Art!—for, while we view'd
 Of SPARTA'S sons the lot severe;
 We caught the SPARTAN *fortitude*,
 And saw their woes—*without a tear!*

1788.

* This is a curious instance of the state of manners in savage life, in which the *Ladies* perform all the domestic duties; and we read in the Scriptures and in HOMER of women being employed in grinding corn, in countries which were more civilized.

PREFACE TO THE SONNETS.

THE word SONNET appears to have been borrowed by the ENGLISH, FRENCH, and SPANIARDS, from the ITALIAN *Sonnetto*, or *piccol suono*.—It is found among the PROVENÇAL writers, but does not seem to have been by them confined to poems of fourteen lines, but to have been a general name for any short poetical effusions, as it must also have been sometimes among the early Italians; for DANTE gives the name of *Sonnet* to his little *Canzone* or Ode, beginning

“O voi che per la via d'Amor passate.”

The exact time when the Sonnet was first subjected to its present rigorous laws cannot be easily ascertained. These laws BOILEAU, in his ART POETIQUE, has very minutely described.

“On dit a ce propos, qu'un jour ce Dieu bizarre,
Voulant pousser a bout tous les rimeurs François,
Inventa du Sonnet les rigoureuses loix;
Voulut qu'en deux quatrains de mesure pareille,
La rime avec deux sons frappât huit fois l'oreille;
Et qu'ensuite, six vers artistement rangés,
Fussent en deux tercets par le sens partagés.
Sur-tout de ce poëme il bannit la licence,
Lui-meme en mesura le nombre et la cadence;
Défendit qu'un vers foible y pût jamais entrer,
Ni qu'un mot déjà mis osât s'y remontrer,
Du reste il l'enrichit d'une beauté supreme.
Un sonnet sans défaut vaut seul un long poëme.
Mais en vain mille auteurs y pensent arriver;
Et cet heureux phénix est encore a trouver.”

But BOILEAU has committed one error in attributing the invention to the French, and another, in saying that PETRARCH “qui est regardé comme le pere du Sonnet,” borrowed it from the *Provençal* or *French* writers, during his abode at VAUCLUSE. —The Italians trace back the existence of the regular Sonnet in their language as far as the Year 1200, but ascribe the merit of polishing and improving it to FRA GUITTONE D’AREZZO, who wrote in the 13th Century, a little before DANTE, who was born in the Year 1264; and every body knows that PETRARCH was not born till the Year 1304.

Whatever may have been the precise origin of the Sonnet, it seems to bear no small affinity to the Greek and Latin Epigram, being applicable to all possible subjects, whether gay or serious, but with the difference of having its length and structure rigidly prescribed. —The Italians consider the difficulty of succeeding in it as so great, that, among the many thousands which have been written in their language, they allow but about half a dozen to be perfect: this applies also to the Greek or Latin Epigram, though with less force, on account of its greater freedom, for of that it has been said, “Jam vero quanta sit ejus
“difficultas inde liquido constabit, quia nullum est poema quod
“minus vitium aliquod patiatum quam Epigramma.”

The Sonnet appears to be well adapted for the expression of a single thought brought to a regular termination, but it must also be supposed from the frequency of its use in those countries, that the required returns of the same rhimes possess some peculiar charm to a French, Spanish, or Italian ear, which is scarcely to be found by an English one—At least the author, on perusing those of SPENSER, SHAKSPEARE, MILTON, and others of our best Poets, confesses himself unable to discover it, and has therefore sometimes in his later effusions of this sort,

which are in a manner extemporaneous, (as he never writes Poetry, or on *Belles Lettres*, except merely for amusement; being chiefly occupied by very different pursuits) contented himself with the sole restriction of the number of lines—It must, however, be allowed that such compositions are not Sonnets, and all that can be said in defence of them, is that three Elegiac stanzas and an heroic couplet, closing the subject, may be thought a space suited to the unfolding of one simple idea.

Of the seven Sonnets which are now printed as specimens, the first and sixth are according to Italian models—The others are what is called *illegitimate*, except the seventh, which is *legitimate* in its structure; but intelligent critics will see that it could only be intended as a burlesque on this species of writing.

SONNET I.

To a Lady, on her beginning to study Italian.

As one, who mounts VESUVIUS' steepy height,
Mid rocks and LAVA climbs his arduous way;
Thick STYGIAN smoke before him blots the day,
And round a dreary waste appals the sight.

If not too soon his coward heart take fright,
And from the labour turn him in dismay;
PARTHENOPE'S rich charms the toil o'erpay,
And fill him, gazing, with unmix'd delight!

So each dry element of Language seems
A dreary waste to your advent'rous aim!
—But these once conquer'd, more engaging themes,
Graced by the MUSE, your raptured thought shall claim:
* With such delight ORLANDO'S fury teems,
And GODFROY'S bold emprise, and PETRARCH'S constant
flame!

* ARIOSTO, TASSO, and PETRARCA—DANTE being in the author's judgment less interesting, except for the sake of some scattered passages—other writers of eminence (Historians and Philosophers as well as Poets) it is unnecessary here to enumerate.

SONNET II.

*To RALPH CARR, ESQ. on the Author having applied
himself to Greek Literature.*

CARR! who, from early youth to Learning train'd,
With all the stores of GREECE and ROME art fraught,
Whose toil unwearied has true taste attain'd
Of all their BARDS have sung, or SAGES taught!

Deem not amiss that I, who sipp'd so long
The hallow'd streams at distance from their source,
Now, in maturer age, lament my wrong,
And each pure fountain seek with late recourse.

* Shall I or SCHOLIASTS, or GRAMMARIANS, fear,
An useful oft, but oft a faithless crew?
—O'er the broad main I, like COLUMBUS, steer,
While stars unnumber'd lend their lustre new;
Nor dread that storms my vent'rous bark o'erwhelm,
FANCY my sail, and COMMON SENSE my helm!

* The true way for a man to make himself well acquainted with the literature of *any* language, is to rely little on Commentators, who often not only disappoint, but mislead, him—and to read extensively, illustrating one author by another, and acting the Commentator for himself.

May, 1796.

SONNET III.

To HENRY GREGG, Esq. in Answer to some Latin Verses.

Vos exemplaria GRÆCA

Nocturnâ versate manu, versate diurnâ. HOR. de Arte Poet.

SWEET is the joy, to haunt each various scene
Through which the winding stream of FANCY flows!
Sweet is the joy, to cull, with mind serene,
The simplest flower that on its margent blows!

But sweeter still, when gain'd some steep ascent,
To mark, with wide survey, its ample course;
Or, on the generous labour firmly bent,
Explore with patient step its distant source!

From HOMER's age to this inglorious time
The weeping MUSE has seen her bays decrease:
E'en ROME unequal felt the rage sublime,
And rais'd her honours on the wrecks of GREECE.
—Bethen the GRECIAN BARDS thy chief delight,
Read them by day—and read again by night!*

* In every page of the ROMAN Classics we trace their obligations to the GREEKS—How much is it to be lamented that we know so little of the Sciences, Arts, and Mythology of *their* predecessors! It was finely said by our great LORD BACON, “This principally raises my esteem of these *Fables*, which I receive not as the product of the age, or invention of the Poets; but as sacred relics, gentle whispers, and the breath of better times, that from the traditions of more ancient nations came, at length, into the flutes and trumpets of the Greeks.”

June, 1797.

SONNET IV.

On reading the Second Olympic Ode of Pindar.

ΑΠΟΝΕΣΤΕΡΟΝ

Εσθλοί νιμονται βιο-
-τον, ου χθονα ταρασσον-
-τες αλκα χερων,
Ουδε ποντιον υδωρ,
κειναν παρα διαιταν.

HIGH HEAV'N, in wisdom, has to Man assign'd

Pleasures which he by labour may obtain :

Toils of the limbs, or energies of Mind

If well employ'd—are not employ'd in vain.

Reliev'd from cares which stimulate the breast,

Inactive souls renounce their wonted powers.

—Are then the boasted joys of ISLANDS BLEST

To lie supine, on beds of golden flowers ?

O THEBAN BARD !—if INDOLENCE the meed

Of PELEUS, CADMUS, and ACHILLES, be;

Such recompense for each illustrious deed

Seems but a second TARTARUS to me :

Whirl'd round Ixion's wheel I less should moan,

Or rolling, endless rolling, SISIPHUS ! thy stone *.

* The Author's predominant pursuit being not Poetry, but the STUDY OF THE HUMAN MIND, even ignorance itself is sometimes amusing to him; yet convinced as he is, that the greatest possible happiness Man can enjoy arises from the sedulous improvement of his intellectual faculties, he seeks all opportunities of exciting both himself and others to some kind of application.

August, 1797.

SONNET V.

*On going into the Country, after dining at a Tavern with
Persons addicted to deep Play.*

HIGH in mid-air the full-wing'd eagle bears
His daring course, and drinks the solar ray;
Yet with remorseless beak his victim tears,
And stoops to carrion as a bird of prey.

KIND PHILOMEL, from her melodious throat,
Warbles, obscure, the tufted groves among;
The night-breeze wafts the sweetly-plaintive note,
And weary travellers listen to her song.

So the keen gamester bears a lofty mien,
Yet by fell rapine his proud port sustains:
So dwells the modest MUSE in shades unseen,
Yet through the world resound her soothing strains.
—Far, far, from gamesters, and from birds of prey,
I seek the Nightingale's, and Poet's, lay!

May, 1796.

SONNET VI.

On Metaphysical and Polemical Researches.

"Christianity is a republication of Natural Religion." BUTLER'S Analogy.

INCONSTANT MAN! of doubts, and creeds, the sport!

Why wander'st thou in metaphysic shades?

Or why to stall'd Theology resort

Thy timorous hopes, to seek dogmatic aids?

Priests and Philosophers may Truth distort,

Yet the wide world one genuine light pervades.

The code of moral Virtue's clear and short,

At Reason's ray all other lustre fades.

BE KIND TO ALL!—AND NO RESENTMENTS FEEL!

—* To Good and Bad, with no restricted favour,

The rain and sun their equal blessings deal:

† The sandal-tree its aromatic flavour,

Tho' injured, gives to the dividing steel.

—Be such thy WORKS—thy FAITH no more shall waver!

* That ye may be the children of your Father which is in Heaven, for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust—Matt. ch. 5. v. 45.

† It has been said that the doctrine of the forgiveness of injuries is not where to be found but in the Christian Dispensation; it is, however, to be found among the Hindoos.

"A good man goes not upon enmity, but is well inclined towards another, even while he is ill-treated by him: so, even while the sandal-tree is felling, it imparts to the edge of the axe its aromatic flavour."

From the SANSKRIT, quoted by Mr. HALHED.

March, 1797,

SONNET VII.

To a Friend in Love, and writing Sonnets.

Tennemi Amor anni vent'uno ardendo. PET. SON.

FLORIO! who now in Love's fierce flame dost broil,
 Sigh like a furnace—like a PETRARCH chime;
 For thee I make—with due returns of rhyme,
 A SONNET—in the true PETRARCHIAN style!
 Canst thou renounce th' alluring harlot's smile
 To vie, in sentiment and verse sublime,
 With LAURA's swain, the glory of his time!
 Who held all sensual pleasure gross and *vile* * ?
 Then shalt thou shine, like him, a deathless Bard;
 His laureate crown shall recompense thy strain!
 —But not like *his*, in LOVE, be thy reward,
 If thou so long canst from loose joy abstain:
 For of all fates, it, certes, is most hard,
 To serve like him—† *three 'prenticeships—in vain!*

* Libidinum me prorsus expertem dicere posse optarem quidem, sed, si dicam, mentiar: hoc securé dixerim, me quanquam fervore ætatis et complexionis ad id raptum, *vilitatem* illam tamen semper in animo *execratum*. Mox vero ad quadragesimum annum appropinquans, dum adhuc et caloris satis esset, et virium, non solum factum illud obscoenum, sed ejus memoriam omnem sic abjeci quasi nunquam fæminam adspexissem.

PET. ad POSTERITATEM.

† From 6 April, 1327, when he first saw LAURA, to 6 April, 1348, when she died; exactly 21 Years, as recorded by himself, in his Sonnets, with remarkable exactness.

July, 1795.

EPILOGUE

To this small Selection from the Author's Port-folios.*

Venit et ingenti violenta TRAGOEDIA passu,
Fronte comæ torvâ, palla jacebat humi. OVID. AMOR. Lib. III. Eleg. 1.

THE bell struck one—no longer whirl'd along
At Fashion's call, alluring to betray,
Through haunts where Pleasure's jaded votaries throng,
With labour equal to the toils of day.

Stretch'd on my couch—ere yet I listless sought
The softer aid of Sleep's oblivious power;
One tranquil hour remain'd for silent thought,
And SHAKESPEARE'S page employ'd that tranquil hour.

When, sudden, to my startled view uprose
A female form, of more than mortal size;
Struggling she seem'd with self-created woes,
Danger, and Grief, cold Fear, and wild Surprise.

* “ Quid *dem*? quid non *dem*? renuis quod tu, jubet alter,
Quod petis, id sanè est invisum acidumque duobus.” HOR. de Arte Poet.
was the Author's difficulty in preparing this trifling present for his friends:
but he was determined, though variety has been his principal object, to ad-
mit nothing, either in verse or prose, of later date than 1798, marked in the
Title page.

A cypress wreath her throbbing temples bound,
Rude was her gesture, and her brow severe;
Wide spread her purple pall that swept the ground,
Down her pale cheek fast flow'd the frequent tear.

Her frenzied look tumultuous pangs confess'd,
In act to strike, a blood-stain'd sword she bore;
Loose flow'd her tresses o'er her heaving breast,
Her awful voice was like the torrent's roar.

And thus she spoke—"Hast thou forgot the time
"Thou vow'dst all trivial subjects to refuse,
"Spurn to contempt the jingling chains of rhyme,
"And give thine hours to *me*—the TRAGIC MUSE?

"Hast thou not yielded to my strong control,
"And felt the force of these majestic charms?
"Have not my visions harrow'd up thy soul
"Mid shades of night, with TERROR's dire alarms?

"And hast thou not, at PITY's tender tale,
"Forgot *thy* sorrows, and for others wept;
"And felt the power of SYMPATHY prevail,
"While through thy veins the life-blood slowly crept?

"Yes, thou hast felt and own'd the mighty rage,
"That lives uninjur'd through the waste of Time;
"Yes, thou hast kindled o'er each burning page,
"Left by my * GREEK TRIUMVIRATE sublime.

* ÆSCHYLUS, SOPHOCLES, and EURIPIDES.

- " Nor hast thou view'd, with negligent disdain,
 " The weaker efforts of imperial ROME;
 —* " Skill'd to renew each old heroic strain,
 " Let *her* an imitative wreath assume!

 " Nor hast thou scorn'd to trace the critic laws,
 " Which rais'd my GALLIC stage to later fame;
 " What imag'd woes CORNEILLE's strong fancy draws!
 " How glows through art RACINE's more temp'rate flame!

 † " And thou hast sought my rich IBERIAN store,
 " From which through EUROPE borrow'd fame extends;
 " Scenes which full oft contain my purer ore,
 " Tho' oft her base alloy THALIA blends!

* It is remarkable that the ten Tragedies which bear the name of SENECA (the only ones we have of the ROMANS) are all, except the OCTAVIA, on GREEK subjects. QUINTILIAN says, the Romans succeeded better in Tragedy than in Comedy, and gives great praise to the THYESTES of VARIUS, which in his opinion equalled the Greeks. We have to regret the loss of that and of the MEDEA of OVID, but again it is probable that these were only imitations of the Greeks.

† The old Spanish COMEDIAS FAMOSAS, though in general a sort of Tragi-Comedy, abound in striking situations and beautiful passages—It is well known that the French and other nations have borrowed much from them, but it is not generally known that the Novel of BLANCHE, or *Le Marriage de la Vengeance*, in *Gil Blas*, the origin of THOMSON's *Tancred and Sigismunda*, is taken from a Spanish Play, "*Casarse por vengarse*," of Don FRANCISCO DE ROXAS, which is in the Author's collection.

" To thee is known whate'er I once inspir'd,
 " When ALBION's vales have been my lov'd abode;
 " And AVON's garlands have thy fancy fir'd,
 " And in thy breast has EMULATION glow'd !

" Think'st thou, penurious of my powerful aid,
 " In this late age I let my wreaths decrease ?
 " Think'st thou my blooming honours e'er shall fade,
 " Or e'er my genuine INSPIRATION cease ?

" Hark, how GERMANIA's wond'ring hills repeat
 " Through all her states, my SCHILLER's recent strains !
 " E'en soft ITALIA owns the generous heat,
 " Since bold ALFIERI rous'd her slumbering swains !

" For the rapt Poet's searching eye unfurl'd,
 " Her ample rolls recording HISTORY brings;
 " Of deeds she tells which shook th' astonish'd world,
 " The fate of Empires, and the fall of Kings !

" With wider scope IMAGINATION roves,
 " Bids forms unreal fix'd attention claim ;
 " In air-built towns, and visionary groves,
 " Embodies thought, and gives to nothing name*.

* And gives to airy nothing
 A local habitation, and a name. SHAKSPEARE, *Midsummer Night's Dream*.

“ Or each new day some *real* theme supplies,
 “ My gifted Bards invoke me not in vain.
 “ Such is the fate of Man—new woes arise
 “ On former woes—EXHAUSTLESS IS MY REIGN !

“ Awake, thou loiterer ! from thine idle dream,
 “ Unworthy thou such glorious tasks to try;
 “ While flows thy verse on each ignoble theme,
 “ In cold neglect th’ unfinished DRAMAS lie !” *

Ah, withering Power !—I own the censure true;
 But tho’ thine anguish rend my tortur’d breast,
 Long must thy sons the painful toil renew,
 Ere forceful thoughts are forcibly express’d.

Ah, withering Power !—what shame attends the Bard,
 When to the crowd his labours he expose ;
 If thy keen feelings be his sole reward,
 And *he* alone lament his fancied woes !

* The Author has by him unfinished *Tragedies* of *three* classes, into which Tragedy seems properly to divide itself—*Historical*, in which, according to the French rules, the *Dramatis Personæ* are great public characters—*Domestic*, in which, following the example of LILLO, SOUTHERN, &c. they are taken from the middle ranks of life—These two classes are founded on *real* events—The *third* class is purely imaginary, under no control, but that of Nature, which prescribes a correct delineation of the PASSIONS. —He thinks it more difficult to write a good *Comedy*, but the public taste appears to be so vitiated at present, that he sees no encouragement to go on with his sketches in that walk of Literature.

December, 1797.

“THUS WE PLAY THE FOOL WITH THE TIME; AND THE SPIRITS OF THE WISE SIT IN THE CLOUDS, AND MOCK US!”
 —said our humorous Prince HAL, or rather, our great Dramatic Poet for him.—GENTLE READER, farewell for the present!—And if any fastidious critic should endeavour to make thee dissatisfied with these slight attempts to amuse thee, these careless effusions of leisure or relaxation from more serious employments: accept, on this occasion, the author’s excuse in the words of his old friend, honest MICHEL DE MONTAIGNE——“Si quelqu’un me dise que c’est avilir les
 “MUSES de s’en servir seulement de jouet et de passe-temps, il
 “ne sçait pas comme moy, combien vaut le plaisir, le jeu, et
 “le passe-temps; apeine que Je ne dise toute autre fin etre
 “ridicule.”

ERRATUM.

Page 25, line 6, for ARRETINE! read ARETINE!

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